

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

A Study of Its Impact on Art Education

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Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, commonly known as No Child Left Behind, focused the attention of the American public on its schools like few education laws in the past. This bi-partisan law was intended to improve the quality of education in our schools. In actuality the law has given rise to a number of controversies that the public and the court system have debated. The impact of the law is far reaching and the long term outcomes it will produce are undetermined at this time. Although researchers have investigated a variety of questions related to NCLB, few studies have focused on the impact NCLB has had on art education programs. This study represents an effort to determine its affects and to understand the meaning of its impact on the field of art education.

This is a summary of selected findings from the National Art Education Foundation funded study of the Impact of No Child Left Behind on Art Education. Research topics the study addressed included the impact NCLB has had on the following areas: staffing, teaching loads, enrollments, funding, scheduling, curriculum, teaching and instruction, and assessment.

The Role of the Visual Arts and Visual Arts Education in Societies

People living in the 21st century face a confluence of unique changes, opportunities, and possibilities that have never existed in the recorded history of human beings. Combined with the pace of change and the upheaval of accepted ideas, macrostructures, and operational systems, the need for people to understand themselves and their place in the world has never been so great. They have been forced to determine what knowledge and skills will enable them to exist, thrive, and live productive meaningful lives in this time.

Throughout all previous epochs, the visual arts have been the central means through which human beings have come to discover and express their unique yet universal essence. The visual arts record, in many cases, has captured, defined, and represents the identity and finest accomplishments of the societies and civilizations that produced them. Much of what we know about some civilizations today is only revealed in the works of art created and left behind by artists and artisans from those civilizations.

The visual arts thrive on the free expression of the imagination and the creative instinct common in all human beings. They have enabled us to explore the changing nature of our existence and to understand how that nature has evolved and yet, in some ways, has remained constant over time, culture, and place. The visual arts develop habits of mind and higher order thinking skills that depend upon a cycle of wonder, imagination, creativity, creation, and evaluation which helps us understand the meaning of our existence as living beings.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965: No Child Left Behind

In arguably one of the most important and controversial legislative acts related to public education in the past three decades, the U. S. Congress in 2002 reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The current reauthorization became commonly known as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation (Chapman, 2005a). NCLB brought about sweeping changes in public education. It is clear that since its reauthorization, NCLB has caused educators decision-makers, and the public to rethink the purposes, goals, and practices of our education systems. Consistent with the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act of 1965, the intent of NCLB is to assist those who are disadvantaged and who attend schools in disadvantaged settings. NCLB promised to close the achievement gap and bring all students up to proficiency by 2014. However, in reality NCLB has had an impact on all schools and communities and in all disciplines and at all instructional levels.

The Visual Arts in Education

The visual arts are composed of four distinct disciplines. These disciplines include aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and production. Each of these disciplines possesses characteristics which unify them, yet uniquely distinguish them from each other. Each has its own unique set of content including knowledge, skills, terminology, concepts, and processes. Each has subcategories of learning and utilizes unique media, methods of investigation, and evaluation processes.

The visual arts and an education that includes quality instruction in the visual arts are central and critical for creating literate individuals for the 21st century in our nation. Our schools, communities, states, and nation hold a trust from the American people that a quality comprehensive education in the visual arts will be provided for all people in our country so they

may contribute to the growth, innovation, creativity, and development of our country and lead meaningful and productive lives.

Statement of the Problem

IN an effort to comply with NCLB mandates, a plethora of methods, including statewide testing programs and other means of assessment, have been utilized by states to measure students' achievement. The focus of these assessments traditionally has been on students' language arts and mathematics achievement. Based on results of these assessments, schools have made extraordinary adjustments in policy and practices (Chapman, 2005b). All of these adjustments are made under the guise of improving students' test performances, learning, and achievement.

The implementation of NCLB has raised numerous issues related to curriculum, instruction, assessment, staffing, scheduling, budgeting, workloads, course enrollments, salaries, teacher licensing, professional development, school and program supervision and administration, and various other educationally related concerns.

Because visual arts learning is not examined on the high stakes tests utilized by states for measuring students' achievement under provisions of NCLB, art education is viewed by many as a discipline of lesser importance in the school curriculum (Sabol, 2009). As a result, art education programming and art educators continue to function at the periphery in public schools (Buchbinder, 2003; Dorn, Madeja, & Sabol, 2004; Sabol, 1990, 1994, 1998a, 1998b, 1999, 2001a, 2006, 2009). To strengthen the case for visual arts education, numerous studies have been conducted suggesting positive relationships between students' learning and participation in visual arts and performances on high stakes tests (Buchbinder, 2003; Burton, 2001; Catterall,

1998; Deasy, 2002; Diket, 2001; Diket, Sabol, & Burton, 2001; Dorn, 1999; Eisner, 1998; Fiske, 1999; Jensen, 2001, Sabol, 2001b). Additionally, researchers in art education (Dorn, 1999; Eisner, 2002; Efland, 2002; Jensen, 2001) have suggested that higher order thinking, creative thinking, problem solving skills, and other habits of mind utilized in other disciplines are introduced, used, developed, and refined in the study of the visual arts and in the creation of works of art. This body of research has attempted to lay foundations for demonstrating the importance and significance of art education in the comprehensive education of all citizens. Much of this research also supports the contention that learning in the visual arts is not necessary to support learning in other disciplines, but rather that it is a necessary component in the comprehensive education of all literate people; that it is of value for its unique content; and that it is necessary and important in and by itself.

To date no comprehensive studies have been done about the practical impact or assessment of the outcomes NCLB has had on art education programming in public schools. Art educators have not been asked to provide their views about numerous issues NCLB raises for their programs and in their classrooms. The field is uninformed about how NCLB has affected art education and about what issues exist related to its implementation in our schools. Art educators have had little or no input in making decisions related to these issues and art educators' specific needs in these areas have been rarely addressed or they have been entirely ignored (Dorn, Madeja, & Sabol, 2004; Sabol, 2006a, 2009).

This study attempted to discover what, if any, impact NCLB has had on art education programming and art teachers' practices. It focused on a number of specific areas of concern related to the direct effects NCLB produced in their classrooms, programs, and school districts. These included staffing, teaching loads, funding, scheduling, enrollments, curriculum,

instructional practices, assessment, and art educators' attitudes about the impact of NCLB on their programs.

Methods and Procedures

Research methodology included a survey of a stratified random sample of 3,050 art educators from elementary, middle, and secondary schools, supervision and administration, higher education, and museum education. All 50 states and the District of Columbia were represented in the sample. Responses were received from each of these levels and from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. A 55 item questionnaire was mailed to the sample. The questionnaire consisted of demographic, Likert attitude measure, forced-choice, and open-ended items. Qualtrics software was used to analyze quantitative data and content analysis methodology was used to analyze qualitative data produced for open-ended response items. In addition a website that included the questionnaire was developed for data collection. Announcements were made to the field about the availability of the website and subjects who self-selected were invited to submit their responses to the questionnaire on the website. A total of 3,412 respondents submitted responses via hardcopies and on the website.

Respondents

Makeup of the 3,412 respondents included: elementary (34%), middle (22%), secondary (32%), higher education (7%), supervision and administration (3%), and museum education (2%) level art educators. Of those responding, 85% were female and 15% were male. Subjects (63%) taught between 13 and 26 years. The average number of years respondents taught was 16.4 years. The average age of respondents was 47.7 years of age. Over three-quarters (76%) of respondents held graduate degrees. Respondents taught in suburban (35%), urban (25%), rural (21%), and town (19%) settings.

Principal Findings

The principal findings of this study focus on the following areas:

- The Impact of NCLB on Staffing in Art Education Programs
- The Impact of NCLB on Teaching and Work Loads in Art Education Programs
- The Impact of NCLB on Enrollments in Art Education Programs
- The Impact of NCLB on Funding in Art Education Programs
- The Impact of NCLB on Scheduling in Art Education Programs
- The Impact of NCLB on Curriculum in Art Education Programs
- The Impact of NCLB on Teaching and Instructional Practices in Art Education Programs
- The Impact of NCLB on Assessment in Art Education Programs
- Art Educators' Attitudes about NCLB
- General Drawbacks of NCLB on Art Education Programs
- General Benefits of NCLB on Art Education Programs

The Impact of NCLB on Staffing in Art Education Programs

When asked how NCLB affected staffing in their art programs, 68% of subjects reported that staffing stayed about the same, 25% reported that it had decreased, and 7% reported increases because of NCLB. In attitude measures, 41% agreed that staffing had not been affected, while 38% disagreed. In an open-ended response item, respondents reported that art programs lost staff (25%), needed more staff (19%), had increased student teacher ratios (9%), experienced increased funding for staffing (8%), had classes cut (7%), and had art programs discontinued (6%). Of those reporting the discontinuation of art programs, 57% were from the elementary level, 34% were from the middle school level, and 9% were from the secondary level. Other effects on staffing were reported with less frequency.

The Impact of NCLB on Teaching and Work Loads in Art Education Programs

NCLB had modest impact on teaching loads with 65% of subjects reporting that teaching loads stayed about the same, while 26% reported increases in teaching loads, and 9% reported decreases in teaching loads. Of those responding 58% reported that their workloads had increased due to requirements of NCLB, while 26% disagreed. Additional reports suggesting that although teaching loads had not been affected, art educators were teaching fewer art classes, because they were required to teach classes in other disciplines, such as language arts and math, provide remediation, or conduct test preparation in subjects.

The Impact of NCLB on Enrollments in Art Education Programs

Enrollments in art education programs were only modestly affected by NCLB with 62% of respondents reporting that enrollments in their programs had stayed about the same, while 21% reported decreased enrollments, and 16% reported increased enrollments. An additional 23%

reported that enrollments in AP courses had increased and 32% reported that enrollments in their art programs had decreased, because students were denied access to art classes due their being required to take extra math or language arts courses or because they had failed to pass language arts or math tests required for the measurement of AYP.

The Impact of NCLB on Funding in Art Education Programs

Reports that funding for their programs had stayed about the same were submitted by 53% of respondents; however, 43% of respondents reported decreases in all areas or in some areas. Only 4% reported increases in funding for their programs. In attitude measures addressing funding, 51% agreed that funding for their programs had been affected by NCLB, while 30% disagreed. Funds cut from art programs were redirected toward core classes, for test prep, remediation, and for special needs and low performing students' support. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) reported budget cuts in the funds needed to purchase consumable supplies and over a third (34%) reported cuts in budgets for instructional resources. Of those respondents who reported decreases in funding, 4% reported that all funding for their art education programs had been cut. Other funding reductions were experienced in the area of budgets for field trips. Those reporting funding cuts reported cuts ranging from 75% (7%) to 5% (7%). The average funding cut reported was 30%. Only 4% of respondents reported increases in their budgets. In an open-ended item addressing funding, respondents reported no affect on funding for their programs (38%), reduced funding for art programs and increased funding for core classes (28%), decreased state funding (20%), funding cuts for art programs (13%), diversion of art funds for test prep (13%), and diversion of art funds for remediation purposes (8%).

The Impact of NCLB on Scheduling in Art Education Programs

Scheduling in art education programs was affected by NCLB, with 67% of respondents reporting that their art schedules had been affected. Of those responding 47% reported that their art schedules had increased interruptions, conflicts, and problems. Additionally, 37% reported that their schedules became more complicated, while only 1% reported decreased interruptions, conflicts, and problems. An additional 32% reported that their schedules had not been affected. Subjects reported that students were pulled out of art classes for remediation (14%) or for testing or practice testing (11%). Others reported teaching multiple courses or classes during the same class period (7%) and reductions or losses of planning time (6%) in their schedules. Respondents identified increased enrollments due to increased numbers of students taking Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses, student requests for art classes to offset the imbalance in emphasis on required language arts and math courses, and students' interest in studying art for personal expression purposes.

The Impact of NCLB on Curriculum in Art Education Programs

Visual arts curriculum was affected by NCLB with 68% of respondents reporting that their curriculum had been affected. They also reported decreased studio time due to increased emphasis on NCLB content in their art classes (65%). In addition respondents reported increased emphasis on national and/or state standards in their curriculum (60%), spending increased time building or revising their curriculum (43%), and increased emphasis on higher order thinking in class assignments (38%). Over a third (36%) of respondents reported cutting art content from their curricula due to increased demands to include language arts and math content in its place. Only 19% reported no changes in their curriculum. In an open-ended item related to curriculum, 32% of respondents reported having less time to cover visual arts curriculum content, while 29%

reported increasing emphasis on language arts, math, social studies, and science content in art curriculum, and 24% reported having less time for students to engage in studio work.

The Impact of NCLB on Teaching and Instructional Practices in Art Education Programs

Reports that instructional practices had not been improved because of NCLB were provided by 48% of respondents. However, 51% reported that they are more reflective about the effectiveness of their instructional practices, 42% reported using more varied instructional methods for instruction, and 37% reported that they use technology more frequently for instruction than previously. Responses on an open-ended item related to instructional practices revealed that 24% of respondents devoted more instruction toward writing and reading; 17% varied instructional methods more often; 15% felt NCLB had no effect on the instructional practices; 13% reported having less time for instruction in studio activities; and 12% related more instruction toward meeting standards.

The Impact of NCLB on Assessment in Art Education Programs

Reports that assessment of learning in art education programs was affected by NCLB were submitted by 57% of respondents. Of those 51% reported that they spent more time grading, creating, or explaining assessments to their students, or managing assessment data; 50% reported increasing emphasis on assessment in their art programs; 43% reported using more types of assessments; and 33% reported conducting more assessments. Increased paperwork and record keeping related to assessment was reported by 23% of respondents. Decreases in studio time because of increased assessments were reported by 21% of respondents. An additional 17% of respondents reported that the quality of student studio work diminished due to less uninterrupted

work time and 17% reported that art class time was spent on test prep for other disciplines or subjects.

Art Educators' Attitudes about NCLB

Items focused on art educators' attitudes about the impact NCLB has had on their programs produced the following results:

- 67% of respondents felt that NCLB has not helped students in their programs become better learners.
- 75% of respondents felt that the quality of their students work has not improved because of NCLB.
- 89% of respondents felt that NCLB has had a negative impact on faculty morale.
- 61% of respondents felt that NCLB has not made them a better teacher.
- 73% of respondents felt that NCLB has had a negative affect on their attitude about being an art educator.
- 54% of respondents felt that the quality of education in their schools has not improved because of NCLB.
- 71% of respondents felt that NCLB has not had a positive affect on their art education programs.
- 70% of respondents felt that the status of art education has not been improved by NCLB.

General Drawbacks of NCLB on Art Education Programs

A total of 41 specific topics for drawbacks of NCLB were reported by subjects. Of these 23% reported experiencing no drawbacks because of NCLB, while 21% reported decreases in funding for art programs, reduced instructional time (19%), increased marginalization of art programs

(19%), increased emphasis on assessment (19%), increased teacher stress because of NCLB (18%), and increased insensitivity to the needs of children (11%).

General Benefits of NCLB on Art Education Programs

A total of 30 topics were reported as possible benefits from NCLB to art education programs. Of these 84% of respondents felt that no benefits were experienced for their programs because of NCLB. Of reported benefits increased credibility for art education (11%), improved curriculum (10%), improved instruction in art education (6%), and improved assessments (5%) were most commonly reported. Other benefits were reported with significantly lower frequencies.

Discussion

No Child Left Behind has been the focus of much controversy and upheaval in the American educational system since its enactment in January 2002. Numerous studies have been conducted about the affects NCLB has had on American schools. Central questions about the goals and purposes of education have been raised. Educational philosophies have been rewritten and others have been discarded. However, common beliefs about education continue to influence the debates. The value of education is undisputed in enabling American citizens to pursue their aspirations and ambitions. Education is viewed as the key to opening the doors of opportunity and is critical for maintaining the security and vigor of our nation. Education is still highly regarded as an essential element for living a rewarding and successful life. In short, education is a key to our nation's future.

About the Respondents

Respondents who participated in the study are “highly qualified”, accomplished and experienced educators. They have taught an average of 16 years and they hold graduate degrees (76%). They continue to engage in professional development and participate in activities of their professional associations.

As a group those who participated in the study demonstrated qualities that are illustrative of high levels of professionalism and commitment to the field of teaching. Their written comments about the various topics investigated in the study created a comprehensive portrait of their knowledge of the field of education and their views about the affects No Child Left Behind has had on their programs and the larger field of art education. They clearly understand and are aware of the range of affects NCLB has had on their students’ achievement and art education programming. Their willingness to participate in the study and the levels of reflection about their programs in relation to NCLB suggest that the field of art education has dedicated, thoughtful, and responsible individuals teaching in its programs. Further, the emphasis on students and the level of commitment they feel about their responsibility for providing the highest quality of education possible for their students, suggests that members of the art education teaching profession have genuine concern, respect, and consideration for all the students they teach.

They also understand the role a quality education in the visual arts plays in the lives of each person in the world and the importance having a comprehensive art education plays in producing fully literate citizens in the United States. Their concerns about the impact of NCLB on their programs and their descriptions of how they have continued to make adjustments and to cope with the ever changing landscape of education clearly shows that the field of art education is on solid ground and members of the art education profession will use their creativity,

knowledge, and skills to continue to provide the highest quality art education possible in their art education programs.

Implications for the field of art education

Having previously summarized findings from the study, a number of conclusions will be presented below about what the findings mean for the field of art education.

(1) In the areas of staffing, teaching loads, and enrollments art education programs have experienced limited negative consequences because of No Child Left Behind. Findings for some questions examined in the study suggest that art programs generally have not experienced significant negative consequences because of NCLB in the areas of staffing, teaching loads, and enrollments. Although modest negative effects were reported in each of these areas, with some being more pronounced than in others, the overall impact of NCLB in them has been limited.

Art teachers have worked to overcome reductions in staffing, increased teaching loads, and growing enrollments. They have kept the interests of their students and programs above their own personal interests in maintaining a vision for quality art education in their schools and communities. They have demonstrated professional commitments to educating students in their programs and, in spite of these challenges, they have maintained high standards of quality in these areas.

(2) No Child Left Behind has created a number of negative affects on art education programs in the areas of scheduling, increased workload, and funding. Art education programs have experienced significant barriers that teachers attributed to the restructuring of educational priorities brought about by NCLB. In the area of scheduling, increasingly complex

and unmanageable schedules, increased schedule interruptions, and reductions in courses, class time, and class sections were identified as areas of significant negative impact caused by NCLB on art education programs.

Increased workload was another critical area of negative impact. Art educators detailed expanded assignments that were not related to their art education programs. These assignments included responsibilities related to management and supervision of students on playgrounds and in lunch rooms, study halls, detention facilities, and buses. These duties are assigned in addition to their regular teaching duties and management of their art education programs. Other direct influences of NCLB on art teacher workloads include increased record keeping, assessment data management, increased time dedicated to curriculum building and revision, and additional preparation of instruction and materials required for providing remediation for students with disabilities and underperforming students in subject areas that do not include the visual arts.

Reduction in funding for art education programming was another major area of negative impact on art education programs caused by NCLB. Funding cuts ranged from 5% to 75%, with some art programs losing all funding. Generally, funds were cut from art education budgets to support other programs identified for testing. These funds were used to hire remediation staff and to purchase additional instructional resources or materials for remedial courses and to purchase test preparation materials for low performing and special needs students. Loss of funding from art education programs caused by the impact of NCLB that led to reductions or elimination of funding for studio and other consumable supplies, field trips, instructional resource materials, professional development, and equipment were common.

Some funding cuts were the result of decreased financial support from the state or because of decreased enrollments and some of these cuts may not be directly related to NCLB. In

many cases related to the impact of NCLB, decreased enrollments and funding were caused by the loss of elective courses in order to accommodate increased credit hour requirements in language arts and math or because of decisions prohibiting students from enrolling in art education courses until they had successfully passed all language arts and math courses required for graduation or for AYP measures.

The collective affect of these cuts in funding led to elimination of visual arts programming, removal of essential visual arts curriculum content, decreased quality in visual arts studio products, and increased stress among students and art educators.

(3) Art educators generally have negative attitudes about the overall impact NCLB has had on art education programming. The general response participants in this study had about the impact of NCLB on their programs was not positive. Art educators in this study, as a group, held negative attitudes about the impact NCLB has had on a number of essential aspects of their programs. Collectively, these negative affects have damaged the scope and quality of art education in the United States. Moreover, they appear to be widespread and present to varying degrees, at all instructional levels within public schools.

Many respondents suggested that instead of improving the status of art education, NCLB has contributed to furthering its marginalization and diminishing the status of art education. They suggested that NCLB has not contributed to making teachers better teachers or to helping students become better learners in their schools or in art education programs. The evidence supports the conclusion that NCLB has contributed to diminished quality of students studio work, negatively affected students' attitudes about coming to art classes, negatively affected visual arts curriculum, negatively affected funding for art education, negatively affected faculty morale, and negatively affected learning in schools. In short, NCLB has had powerful

detrimental affects on nearly all aspects of art education programming which in turn fueled the marginalization of art education and accelerated the loss of status for art education. Not only has NCLB left visual arts students behind, but it has contributed in substantial ways to eliminating or preventing quality education in the visual arts from being provided to students in art education programs in schools.

(4) Some aspects of art education programs have experienced positive affects from NCLB. Art educators found a number of positive affects from NCLB. As a group art educators feel that NCLB has contributed to making them become more reflective about their programs and their teaching. They have come to the understanding that adjustments to accepted practices and expectations have enabled them to make improvements in their programs and instruction. They reported spending more time revising curriculum and instructional practices and increasing their emphasis on assessment of learning in art.

In most cases art educators took advantage of the opportunities NCLB offered to improve their programs in ways they could manage or fund. They embraced the opportunity to utilize their creativity, knowledge, experience, and training to cope with the evolving field of art education and the general field of education. They embraced the idea that by making changes necessary to assist in the national goals of improving education in our nation's schools, they were making comparable improvements in their programs and in the quality of their art education programs.

Recommendations

Findings reported from this study provide a complex portrait of a number of areas in which NCLB has affected art education. Although the report provided aggregated summaries of

findings the data produced, differences exist in how NCLB affected art education programs locally and within instructional levels. Just as art education programs vary because of resources, and priorities established by various decision makers and stakeholders in communities, it cannot be denied that NCLB has affected all educational programs in all settings to some extent. Keeping these variations in mind and the need to be responsive to local needs of communities, schools, and students, the following recommendations are offered.

(1) Visual arts education must be implemented and taught as a core subject in public schools.

With the passage of NCLB, visual arts education was identified by the national government as a necessary discipline among the core subjects taught in American schools. Placing art education among the core subjects in American schools must be more than a well-intended action. It must actually take place. Those with decision-making power must provide action and support for meeting this goal of implementing comprehensive arts education in all schools and achieving parity for the arts among all core subjects a reality. This involves educating stakeholders and others who can contribute to the realization of this goal. Art educators and all stakeholders must be vigilant and proactive in keeping focused on achieving this goal for all students in all communities. They need to strengthen their base of support by initiating and building relationships with those who have similar needs and concerns in order to strengthen their collective voices. They should use every opportunity to make the goal more visible to the broader population. In short, they must construct long-range strategies and action plans that are inclusive and proactive and take continuous measured actions that will make this goal a reality. Efforts should focus on convincing power sources that achieving this goal will contribute to achieving the goals of others and increase the capacities of everyone. It must be

made clear that achieving this goal is in the best interests of all individuals, communities, and the nation. With the placement of art education among the core subjects in American schools by NCLB, visual art education was identified as a national priority. Now it must be treated as one and action must be taken to make it so.

(2) Art educators must be provided professional development that will expand their knowledge and skills for providing quality education in the visual arts. Art educators understand that the ultimate responsibility for their professional development rests on themselves. They have to seek opportunities for professional development in all of its forms. They should communicate their professional development needs to their local administrators and school boards. They must be creative in addressing their needs through all means. They should be open to new developments and information and be flexible and willing to explore them. Art educators should investigate developments in the field and ask probing questions about the purposes and motivations fueling initiatives and outcomes they may produce. When possible, they must be proactive in leading and implementing change that will improve visual arts education in their schools and communities.

Professional associations at the local, state, and national levels must be committed to providing professional development for all art educators, whether they are members of such associations or not. Professional associations must understand that they have a responsibility to meet the professional development needs of educators in order to enhance the professionalism of their members and also to positively impact the quality of visual arts education provided in all schools. By this same token, it is important for art educators to participate in the activities of their professional associations in order to provide their input and experiences for shaping the services and direction of these associations and by contributing to the development of them.

Preservice education programs must provide the highest quality preparation and professional development of art educators. Such programs must continue to monitor their curricula and make improvements to keep their preservice programs current and to make them as encompassing as possible. It is of utmost importance that preservice art education programs establish and maintain ongoing contact with art educator practitioners to better understand the ever changing needs of art educators in the field.

Those in higher education must conduct research about art education that is tied to the art classroom. Research should provide information that enables art educators to better understand and improve education and instruction in the visual arts. Stronger emphasis must be placed on research that is focused on what is currently happening in art classrooms and on how the training and education of preservice and practitioners can be meaningfully altered and enhanced to address these issues and needs in the contemporary art classroom. Researchers must seek and be provided with resources necessary to conduct this work.

Professional development of art educators is a constant that influences the quality of teaching, program development, and learning in all art education programs and it must included as a priority among all educators.

(3) Art educators must be allowed to concentrate their full effort toward providing quality art education for their students. Art educators need to be supported in their efforts to improve their programs and develop themselves as educators. They must be permitted to devote their full efforts to providing quality education in the visual arts. It is objectionable that they are required to provide supplemental instruction in subject areas outside art education. It is demeaning for art educators to be assigned menial tasks such as lunch room, play ground, or detention supervision. It is not the best use of their knowledge, skills and training to have them

monitor study halls and bussing activities. It is inappropriate to require them to provide remedial instruction and test preparation instruction for students in subjects not included in the visual arts or in which they are not licensed. It is incorrect uses of their time and talents to prepare instructional materials, lessons, and instruction in subjects being tested in other disciplines. It is equally objectionable and unfair to students needing this support to have it provided by art educators who may not be trained or qualified to provide it. It must be asked how these abuses serve the needs of the students and how they function to promote learning in the visual arts?

Art educators must be treated with the same levels of respect and professionalism as educators in other disciplines. Other solutions must be created and explored to meet the needs outside the art education programs that art educators have been forced to meet. If art education is to be realized as one of the core subjects, then art educators must be treated in the identical manner as educators who teach in the traditional areas included among the core. They must be allowed to utilize their knowledge, skills, training, and motivation in concentrating their full efforts on providing art education for their students. Abuses of art educators reflect poorly on school leadership and on the character and quality of education schools produce while setting standards for future abuses of other educators that will further erode the overall quality of education in all disciplines.

(4) Visual arts curricula, instruction, and assessments must be revised, developed, and expanded to provide the finest quality of education possible. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are the cornerstones of educational programming. As such they reflect the development and growth of the disciplines they represent. As disciplines evolve changes must be made in curriculum, instruction, and assessment to capture and reflect these changes. Art educators must understand that by clinging to established content, ways of doing things, and

ways of understanding, they are restricting the growth and revitalization of their programs and inhibiting the education of their students.

Including language arts, math, and interdisciplinary learning in art education is necessary at all instructional levels. Knowledge, skills, and processes from these disciplines should be included in visual arts education, but content from these areas must support art education and never take the place of art education content. Research has proven that connecting learning from disparate disciplines enhances learning in all disciplines. Relationships between thinking processes, problem solving abilities, and product creation are enhanced through such connectivity. Art educators must always be mindful that art education content should not be sacrificed or removed from curriculum in order to substitute content from other disciplines. They must be vigilant in insuring that learning about art is of paramount importance in their art education programs and in educating administrators and other decision makers that the focus of learning in the art classroom must always be on learning about art.

(5) Visual arts educators must be given resources necessary for providing quality education in the visual arts. Education depends on the overall impact of a full range of contributing factors. One such factor exists in the form of resources that support educational programming. To be sure, variation exists among communities and within schools with regard to resources available to support education. As in all disciplines, art education programs need resources to support learning and teaching in them.

Resources such as adequate funding, workable schedules, classroom spaces, technology, studio materials, equipment, and supplies, instructional materials and teaching aids, and other resources are essential for teaching and learning in the visual arts. Lack of these kinds of support creates obstacles that prevent or inhibit learning in the visual arts.

Without adequate funding, art programs cannot provide consumable materials necessary for introducing, developing, and refining learning and production of artistic creations and studio products. Instructional materials and teaching aids necessary for supporting instruction are essential for introducing curriculum content and for enabling students to understand it.

Workable schedules and elimination of interruptions to them provide time for curriculum content to be introduced and for students to engage in learning in the art classroom. Access to technology to support curriculum development, teaching, assessment, learning, and creation of works of art is essential to providing education that meets the needs of students in all art education programs. Removal of these resources or redirecting them into other disciplines cripples art education programs in significant and meaningful ways. Preservation and expansion of such resources are vital for sustaining the quality and vitality of art education programs. Art educators have shown creativity and innovation in their attempts to address shortages and the loss of such resources. They have worked to maintain their programs and to enhance learning in them in spite of such hurdles.

Art education programs should not be singled out for cutbacks or other actions that remove resources or diminish the quality of education provided in them. If cutbacks in funding and other resources needed to support art education programs must be made, they should be equivalent or comparable to cutbacks in all other subjects. Individual subject areas or clusters of programs that have been marginalized should not bear the brunt of reductions or diversions of resources. Resources should not be siphoned from art education programs in order to support subjects that are being tested. Practices such as these, reflect lack of support for learning in art education and position art education programs in lower tiers of importance and ultimately contribute to denying students education in the visual arts they deserve and expect.

Conclusion

NCLB has caused the American public to focus its attention on the purposes of education in the United States and its expectations for the education systems in the nation. Without question, NCLB has made an indelible mark on the history of American education. It has contributed to placing education at the forefront of the nation's agenda. The controversies and differing views about essential questions and issues raised by NCLB will continue to be studied and debated.

It is likely that the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act will include a number of revisions. It is unlikely that the current focuses of NCLB on assessment and improvement of teaching and learning will be removed. Instead it is easy to imagine that all educators and schools will be required to abandon unproductive approaches to schooling and entrenched models of education that have failed to meet the changing needs of our country in the 21st century.

Without question, NCLB has forced educators, parents, and all citizens to take a long hard look at what is happening in our schools and to challenge accepted practices and to question their productivity. NCLB has caused every community in our country to ask what it expects of our schools and what our country needs from its education systems in order for our country to continue to grow and prosper. It has asked every person to consider what is needed educationally for any citizen living in a free democratic society to survive in the world and to contribute to such a society. It has asked our schools to look into the future and to take necessary steps now to

prepare our country for the challenges and opportunities that surely await our nation and each of us.

It is highly likely that the creativity and resourcefulness that every art teacher uses in their daily teaching and encourages in each of their students will provide insightful models for solving the educational crisis in which our country currently finds itself and through their dedicated efforts will continue to open the wonder and inspiration the visual arts have held for every civilization since the beginning of time.

Visual arts education must play a central and significant role in shaping the educational future of this country. All past civilizations have left lasting marks of their times of dominance in the forms of the products of their visual artists. One must ask what kinds of lasting marks will the United States leave behind following its time of dominance in the world? What kind of lasting evidence will America produce for future generations to study if its citizens fail to receive a quality education in the visual arts that is of equal or higher quality than the education currently demanded in language arts, mathematics, and other disciplines? What lasting mark will Americans leave behind if it is not found in the products of our nations' artists, musicians, dancers, and actors? In our educational systems, no child should be left behind from receiving the highest possible quality education in the visual arts. Surely, if we leave behind any of our children or fail to provide an education that includes the visual arts in this effort, our nation will be left behind.

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