



# ARTS IN EDUCATION

N E W S L E T T E R

## ARTS IN EDUCATION COUNCIL OF B.C.

P.O. Box 62023, Arbutus R.P.O.

#143 - 4255 Arbutus Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1Z1

Co-Chairs: Ron Rumak, 604-713-5441, FAX 604-713-5443, email rumak@hudson.vsb.bc.ca

Morag Cuthbertson, 604-733-6562, FAX 604-736-6053, email moragc@unixg.ubc.ca

Or contact: Elizabeth Lane, 604-738-2552, FAX 604-738-2556, e-mail belane@istar.ca

### SPRING 2002

THE ARTS IN EDUCATION  
NEWSLETTER

is published quarterly by the  
Western Council of  
Arts in Education Associations  
which functions as the  
Arts In Education Council of BC

ISSN 1197-432X

### In This Issue

Champions of Change .....	1
Small is Beautiful .....	3
Arts/Ed Links .....	3
Council News .....	4

**“The only things  
in my life that  
compatibly exist  
with this grand  
universe are the  
creative works of  
the human spirit.”**

- ANSEL ADAMS

## *Champions of Change...*

### STUDY EXAMINES ARTS AND THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

“Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning” is an American research initiative developed in cooperation with the Arts Education Partnership and The President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities to explore why and how young people are changed through their arts experiences. Over the last few years, seven teams of researchers examined a variety of arts programs using diverse methodologies. The researchers stated, *“When young people are involved with the arts, something changes in their lives. We’ve often witnessed the rapt expressions on the faces of such young people. Advocates for the arts often use photographs of smiling faces to document the experience. ... But in a society that values measurements and uses data-driven analysis to inform decisions about allocation of scarce resources, photographs of smiling faces are not enough to gain or even retain support. Such images alone will not convince skeptics or even neutral decision-makers that something exceptional is happening when and where the arts become part of the lives of young people. ...We believed that evidence could be collected that would help answer the questions of why positive changes occur and what might be done to replicate them.”*

The resulting document, over 100 pages, contains reports on the research by each of the seven teams, covering well-established models of arts education, as well as arts education in out- of -school settings. The entire study is easily found on the web under *Champions of Change*. In the meantime, we think our readers will be interested in the condensed outline of the research findings as delineated in the Executive Summary. (We have edited, in places, due to space constraints).



“When well taught, the arts provide young people with authentic learning experiences that engage their minds, hearts, and bodies. The learning experiences are real and meaningful for them.

While learning in other disciplines may often focus on development of a single skill or talent, the arts regularly engage multiple skills and

*(continued on page 2)*

---

## CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE *(continued from page 1)*

abilities. Engagement in the arts – whether the visual arts, dance, music, theater or other disciplines – nurtures the development of cognitive, social and personal competencies. Although the *Champions of Change* researchers conducted their investigations and presented their findings independently, a remarkable consensus exists among their findings:

### WHY THE ARTS CHANGE THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

#### ✓ **The arts reach students who are not otherwise being reached.**

Young people who are disengaged from schools and other community institutions are at the greatest risk of failure or harm. The researchers found that the arts provided a reason, and sometimes the only reason, for being engaged with school or other organizations. These young people would otherwise be left without access to any community of learners.

#### ✓ **The arts reach students in ways that they are not otherwise being reached.**

Other recent educational research has produced insights into different styles of learning. This research also addresses examples of young people who were considered classroom failures, perhaps “acting out” because conventional classroom practices were not engaging them. These “problem” students often became the high-achievers in arts learning settings.

Success in the arts became a bridge to learning and eventual success in other areas of learning.

#### ✓ **The arts connect students to themselves and each other.**

Creating an artwork is a personal experience. The student draws upon his or her personal resources to generate the result. By engaging his or her whole person, the student feels invested in ways that are deeper than “knowing the answer”.

#### ✓ **The arts transform the environment for learning.**

When the arts become central to the learning environment, schools and other settings become places of discovery. According to (the researchers), the very school culture is changed, and the conditions for learning are improved. Figurative walls between classrooms and disciplines are broken down. Teachers are renewed. Even the physical appearance of a school building is transformed through the representations of learning.

#### ✓ **The arts provide learning opportunities for the adults in the lives of young people.**

Those held responsible for the development of children and youth – teachers, parents, and other adults – are rarely given sufficient or significant opportunities for their own continuing education. With adults participating in life-long learning, young people gain an understanding that learning in any field is a never-ending process. The roles of the adults are also changed - in effective programs, the adults become coaches - active facilitators of learning.

#### ✓ **The arts provide new challenges for those students already considered successful.**

Boredom and complacency are barriers to success. For those young people who have outgrown their established learning environments, the arts can offer a chance for unlimited challenge. In some situations described in the research, older students may also teach and mentor younger students. In others, young people gain from the experience of working with professional artists.

#### ✓ **The arts connect learning experiences to the world of real work.**

The world of adult work has changed, and the arts learning experiences described in the research show remarkable

consistency with the evolving workplace. Ideas are what matter, and the ability to generate ideas, to bring ideas to life and to communicate them is what matters to workplace success. Working in a classroom or a studio as an artist, the young person is learning and practicing future workplace behaviors. A company is a company, whether producing an opera or a breakthrough technological service.

### HOW THE ARTS CHANGE THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

#### ✓ **Enable young people to have direct involvement with the arts and artists.**

Young people become and see themselves as artists. Whether creating art works, ... or performing, ... or perhaps even teaching younger student artists, ...the students learn various disciplines through hands-on art experiences. They actively engage with artistic content, materials, and methods.

#### ✓ **Require significant staff development.**

The best teachers are life-long students. The teachers involved in the staff development programs examined by the *Champions of Change* researchers describe life-changing experiences that transform their professional lives. High-impact programs demand both adequate staff preparation and strong administrative support. Well-trained staff and teachers also become leaders for institutional and systemic change.

#### ✓ **Support extended engagement in the artistic process.**

Opportunities to achieve artistic and learning excellence cannot be confined to forty-five minute time periods. Sustained engagement during individual sessions as well as expanded program length support enhanced learning

*(continued on page 3)*

## CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE *(continued from page 2)*

opportunities. These learning experiences are also not limited to place; school is just one of many settings where this learning occurs.

Superior results are also associated with the concept of “practice” and the development of a sense of “craft.”

### ✓ **Encourage self-directed learning.**

Students learning in and through the arts become their own toughest critics. The students are motivated to learn not just for test results or other performance outcomes, but for the learning experience itself. According to (one) study, these learners develop the capacity to experience “flow”, self-regulation, identity, and resilience – qualities regularly associated with personal success.

### ✓ **Promote complexity in the learning experience.**

Students who might otherwise complain of boredom become fully

challenged. Unlike other learning experiences that seek right or wrong answers, engagement in the arts allows for multiple outcomes. One researcher found that when “refusing to simplify” Shakespeare’s challenging texts, students became passionately engaged in learning classic works which high schoolers so often consider boring. Effective learning in the arts is both complex and multi-dimensional.

### ✓ **Allow management of risk by the learners.**

Rather than see themselves as “at-risk”, students become managers of risk who can make decisions concerning artistic outcomes and even their lives. The students learn to manage risk through “permission to fail,” according to one study, and then take risks “to intensify the quality of their interactions, products, and performances.”

### ✓ **Engage community leaders and resources.**

A recent study, “*Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts That Value Arts Education*”, found that “the single most critical factor in sustaining arts education in schools is the active involvement of influential segments of the community in shaping and implementing the policies and programs of the district.” Similarly, effective arts learning out of school also requires the active engagement of the community.”



The *Champions of Change* research provides compelling evidence that the arts can and do serve to facilitate change in learning. Ranging from Shakespeare to opera projects, the subjects and content of the seven individual studies provide much thought-provoking analysis – we recommend readers take a look.

## SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

In a world which seems increasingly dominated by “big box” stores and aggressive merchandising, it was refreshing to read an editorial by David van Berckel, President of Opus Framing and Arts Supplies, in the company’s newsletter. He writes:

*Many years ago I was fortunate enough to stumble upon a copy of the book “Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered”, by E.F. Schumacher. This book was pivotal in shaping my approach to how I wished to do business.*

*The concept of ‘small is beautiful’ is based on a very simple premise, really. It is about taking a human approach to doing business, which means not only reinvesting in your company but also giving back to those that support you. This includes your community, your customers and your staff. The idea that most influenced me was centered on the philosophy of how profits are shared*

*and distributed. .... Obviously, any business must make profits in order to survive and continue to grow but it is also important that business work to make improvements for its staff and customer community. .... Social context is about giving back to our community and customers. On a global scale this might mean taking care of the environment, or lobbying for better work standards. From a localized perspective it is doing some of things that we have done here at Opus. This includes developing a donation program focused on the visual arts, creating a newsletter for our customers, and building an educator’s program for art education. The educator program provides discounts on products used in the classroom and outreach support in the way of demonstrations and school events. ....*

Opus has stores in Vancouver, Victoria, Langley and Kelowna, as well as a busy mail order department.

## Some International Arts Education Links

**ADAM (Art, Design, Architecture & Media Information Gateway)**

<http://adam.ac.uk/sindex.html>

**American Alliance for Theater and Education**

<http://www.aate.com>

**ArtsEdge**

<http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/welcome>

**ArtsEd Net**

<http://www.artsednet.getty.edu>

**Arts Literacy for a Changing America**

<http://aep-arts.org>

**International Society for Education Through Art INSEA**

<http://cspace.unb.ca/insea/>

**International Society for Music Educators ISME**

<http://www.isme.org/>

**National Drama**

<http://www.nationaldrama.co.uk>

**National Endowment for the Arts - NEA Partnerships in Arts Education**

<http://arts.endow.gov/partner/Artsed.html#Partnership>

# COUNCIL NEWS

Planning continues apace for an arts in education forum scheduled for this Fall, convened by the Arts in Education Council, ArtStarts and the B.C. Coalition for Music Education. As reported in our Winter issue, we have had an ongoing concern about the arts component in a generalist teacher's training, and subsequently the provision of arts education at the elementary level. The "forum" will comprise a round table discussion with invited participants from all areas of elementary arts education, from the teaching of teachers to the inspiring of students.

A provisional title is "Building a Better Foundation for Arts Education in B.C." The need, or rationale is described as follows:

*This is a challenging time for education in British Columbia. There is a need to build bridges following the recent labour dispute; the new funding formula has presented school boards with the need to make difficult choices; and there is the possibility of teacher shortages as the 'boomer generation' retires.*

*Against this backdrop, there is an expectation that schools will*

*continue to meet their curricular mandate to provide education in the arts.*

*It is vital that elementary schools be resourced properly to provide the foundations of arts education. The building blocks of vocabulary, skills and awareness are as important in music, art, dance or drama as they are in math, science or language. Failure to provide this foundation in the early years will limit both participation and performance in arts subjects later on. Failure to include arts in education will not only be an abrogation of responsibility; it will short-change our kids and our society.*

Our mission is to create a forum for the discussion of models for the delivery of arts education in B.C.'s elementary schools. All stakeholders have a role to play in determining the future of arts education. Specifically, however, we wish to create a dialogue amongst:

- the consumers of education (students, parents and their representatives)
- the providers of education (Ministry officials, School Board trustees and administrators,

school principals, vice-principals and teachers)

- the bodies responsible for educating, certifying and representing the interests of those charged with delivering arts education (the universities/colleges that grant education degrees/diplomas, the College of Teachers and the B.C.T.F.

The intention is to convene a facilitated workshop as a first step in building a consensus on how arts education should be approached in this province. Involving as many as possible of the groups identified above, the workshop will explore the implications of current curricula, barriers to meeting the curriculum guidelines and opportunities for moving forward. The workshop will last one day and will be open to interested observers.



Readers with thoughts on the above are welcome to contact Ron Rumak at [rumak@hudson.vsb.bc.ca](mailto:rumak@hudson.vsb.bc.ca) or Norman Mould at [norman@marktrend.com](mailto:norman@marktrend.com)

**PLEASE LEND YOUR SUPPORT TO ARTS IN EDUCATION**

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP (\$50)**

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP (\$15)**

Association or Organization Name

Name

Address

Address

Postal Code

Postal Code

Contact Person, Name, Position

Phone No.

(work)

(home)

Phone No.

Fax No.

e-mail

Fax No.

e-mail

Corporate and Individual Donations are Welcome. Please enclose fee with application. Make cheque payable to the Arts in Education Council (a registered non-profit society). Mail to Arts in Education Council, PO Box 62023, Arbutus RPO, #143 - 4255 Arbutus Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1Z1. Tax receipts will be issued. Your donation is very much appreciated.



# ARTS IN EDUCATION

N E W S L E T T E R

## ARTS IN EDUCATION COUNCIL OF B.C.

P.O. Box 62023, Arbutus R.P.O.

#143 - 4255 Arbutus Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1Z1

Co-Chairs: Ron Rumak, 604-713-5441, FAX 604-713-5443, email rumak@hudson.vsb.bc.ca

Morag Cuthbertson, 604-733-6562, FAX 604-736-6053, email moragc@unixg.ubc.ca

Or contact: Elizabeth Lane, 604-738-2552, FAX 604-738-2556, e-mail belane@istar.ca

### SUMMER 2002

THE ARTS IN EDUCATION  
NEWSLETTER

is published quarterly by the  
Western Council of  
Arts in Education Associations  
which functions as the  
Arts In Education Council of BC

ISSN 1197-432X

### In This Issue

Eloquent Evidence .....	1-2
Stay at Home & Gallery Hop .....	3
Free Art Guide .....	3
Arts Ed in the News .....	4
Letters .....	4

***“All the blessings  
of our land will be  
lost if we strip  
our children of  
their souls —  
if imagination is  
not deemed  
essential to the  
whole person.”***

— BOB BARTON,  
ARTIST, EDUCATOR,  
STORYTELLER

## ~ Eloquent Evidence ~

Arts in Education advocates, policy makers, and scholars in the United States have done a superb job over the past couple of decades in researching and documenting what many teachers, students and parents already know intuitively – that the arts are **critical** to education and learning. An excellent brochure, *Eloquent Evidence: Arts at the Core of Learning*, by Elizabeth Murfee, is a wonderful starting point for the teacher or advocate wishing to add some powerful ammunition to the arts in education arsenal. The booklet cites, in brief, some of the myriad studies done in the 1990s showing how the inclusion of the arts is integral to a wide variety of school, and life, outcomes.

For example, a 1993 study by Karen Hamblen, “*Theories and Research That Support Art Instruction for Instrumental Outcomes*”, affirms that **the arts are serious and rigorous academic subjects. They are an essential aspect of human knowing.** The arts delight students, but they are also intellectual disciplines of substance. Like language or mathematics, the arts involve the use of complex symbols to communicate. To attain competence in the arts, it is necessary to gain literacy with these symbol systems. Some, like music and painting, use non-verbal symbols; others, like poetry and song, use language in particular ways.

Arts teachers daily ask their students to engage in learning activities which require use of higher-order thinking skills like analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Arts education, then, is first of all an activity of the mind.

**The arts have far-reaching potential to help students achieve education goals.** Schools that incorporate music, art, drama, dance and creative writing into the basic curriculum have found that teaching the arts has a significant effect on overall success in school. Because the arts are closely associated with important ideas and events in history, students who have a good background in the arts are likely to have a richer source of information and insight to draw upon, compared to those who do not study the arts. In the U.S., students of the arts continue to outperform their non-arts peers on the Scholastic Achievement Test. In 1995 SAT scores for students who studied the arts more than four years were 59 points higher on the verbal and 44 points higher on the math portion than students with no coursework or experience in the arts. (*The College Board, Profile of LAT and Achievement Test Takers, 1995*)

**Reading, writing and math skills can be enhanced through the arts.** Many studies document the role of the arts in improving basic skills, the 3 R's. Because of the mounting evidence linking the arts to basic learning, some researchers refer to the arts as “The Fourth R.”

For example, “Humanitas Program” students in Los Angeles high schools

*(continued on page 2)*

---

## ELOQUENT EVIDENCE *(continued from page 1)*

wrote higher quality essays, showed more conceptual understanding of history and made more interdisciplinary references than non-Humanitas students. Low-achieving students made gains equivalent to those made by high-achieving students. The Humanitas program incorporates the arts into a broad humanities curriculum, drawing upon the relationship between literature, social studies and the arts. The program has reached 3,500 students in twenty high schools. (*The Humanitas Program Evaluation 1990-91, by Pamela Aschbacher and Joan Herman, 1991*)

In another example cited, the writing quality of elementary students was consistently and significantly improved by using drawing and drama techniques, compared to the control group, which used only the discussion approach. Drama and drawing techniques allowed the student writer to test-out, evaluate, revise and integrate ideas before writing begins, thus significantly improving the results. (*Drama and Drawing for Narrative Writing in Primary Grades, by Blaine H. Moore and Helen Caldwell, 1993*)

**Creativity is naturally developed through the arts.** Every child has the innate urge and capacity to be artistically expressive. Arts education requires students to draw upon their creative abilities and to deepen them, as well. The benefit is that creative thinking, once learned early, lasts for a lifetime and can be applied in other endeavors. In one example, total creativity measures were four times higher for elementary students in an arts curriculum than for the control groups in two Ohio school districts. Gains were maintained and continued to improve in a second year evaluation. (*The Schooled Mind: Do the Arts Make a Difference? An Empirical Evaluation of the Hamilton Fairfield SPECTRA+ Program, 1992-93, by Richard L. Luftig, 1994*)

**Student engagement and persistence improve within an**

**arts-based curriculum.** The arts can transform the classroom environment, making learning a lively, invigorating experience. In schools using an arts-based program entitled "Different Ways of Knowing", classes were more interactive, there were more student-initiated topics and discussions, and more time was devoted to literacy activities and problem-solving activities. The program also produced significant positive effects on student achievement, motivation and engagement in learning. (*Different Ways of Knowing: 1991-94 National Longitudinal Study Final Report, by James S. Catterall, 1995*)

**High risk students are helped through the arts.** Sometimes, the student who is not doing well in traditional academics might have an artistic talent that has not yet flowered. As the writers of The Fourth R point out: "Imagine what might happen to Leonardo da Vinci today if he were placed in the average American public school. This illegitimate son of a poor woman, a left-handed writer who loved to draw and challenge conventional thought, would be labeled an at-risk special education candidate." Seventy-five per cent of students at an after-school program for high-risk youth in a community arts center in Pittsburgh go on to college. (*Safe Havens, Portraits of Educational Effectiveness in Community Art Centers that Focus on Education in Economically Disadvantaged Communities, by Jessica Davis, 1993*)

**The arts prepare students for jobs.** Skill requirements for all workers are going up, including those in production and support jobs. In the modern business environment, the ability to communicate, adapt, diagnose problems and find creative solutions is more important than ever before. These attributes can be nurtured and honed through studying the arts. (And, of course, the computer revolution has opened up huge opportunities for students

trained in visual arts, media arts, music, and so on.)

In the U. S., and in Canada, the arts themselves are a big employer, and a big, economically important industry. In the States, the Education Commission estimates that "out of a classroom of 30 children, maybe 10 will be employed in an arts-related occupation someday."

Well – all of these "arts reasons" are well-known mantras to consider over the summer. In an ideal world, we would not be seeking to prove the arts' place in education. Governments and administrators, parents and taxpayers, would all know that the arts are wonderful and important in themselves. However, increasingly in North America, emphasis on the "bottom-line" has forced arts advocates to somehow justify the inclusion of the arts in the curriculum, or at very least, ensure that they won't steal resources from some other area. These are perilous times for the arts in many school districts. However, there is still much that is positive, and many teachers and administrators who believe in the value of the arts. We must take strength and inspiration from these examples.

Have a great, art-filled summer!



The **Eloquent Evidence** brochure is available from the National Assembly of State Art Agencies, 1029 Vermont Avenue NW, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Washington, DC 20005. E-mail: [Nasaa@nasaa-arts.org](mailto:Nasaa@nasaa-arts.org). Web: <http://www.nasaa-ats.org>.

Another useful publication, **Schools, Communities, and the Arts: A Research Compendium**, developed by the National Endowment for the Arts in cooperation with the Morrison Institute for Public Policy, can be purchased in print or diskette versions from the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network, Education Dept., the J. F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC 20566-0001.

**Be Smart, Include Art: A Planning Kit for PTAs**, can be obtained from the The National PTA, 330 North Wabash Avenue, Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60611.

## STAY AT HOME AND GALLERY HOP THE WORLD THIS SUMMER

Virtual exhibits on top international gallery web sites can provide the stay-at-home traveler with art experiences guaranteed to entertain, educate and inspire. *John Lee*, writing in the *Globe and Mail* (12/01/02), describes some of the best sites.

Top on his list is the **State Hermitage Museum** in St. Petersburg, Russia ([www.hermitage.ru](http://www.hermitage.ru)). This is “a fantastic site built by IBM as a community-relations project. (It) achieves on-line what curators of the bricks and mortar version have been unable to do for decades: display more than 5 per cent of its collections to visitors. The site is so impressive you may never feel the need to visit the real thing.”

Also receiving high marks is the **Van Gogh Museum**, Amsterdam ([www.vangoghmuseum.nl](http://www.vangoghmuseum.nl)). *Lee* says, “The Van Gogh Museum has boldly gone where few other cyberspace galleries have gone before: It has improved upon the experience of a real visit. Web guests can take a virtual walk through the museum’s most popular exhibition areas and closely examine 70 of the Dutch artist’s paintings. The most unique feature allows visitors to wander through two of van Gogh’s paintings, *The Bedroom* and *The Yellow House*.”

One of the world’s most famous

galleries, **The Louvre Museum**, Paris ([www.louvre.fr](http://www.louvre.fr)), features a collection of nine virtual QuickTime tours on its web site. The viewer can travel through galleries of sculpture, Egyptian antiquities and print and drawing collections. Very intriguing is a trip around the medieval Louvre, its castle keep and dungeons.



The new **Tate Modern**, on London’s South Bank, accessible from the Tate Gallery’s home page ([www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)), is probably better seen in person, according to *Lee*, as “the site serves more as an information source on the impressive former power station building it’s housed in and its roster of exhibitions than as a substitute for a real visit.”

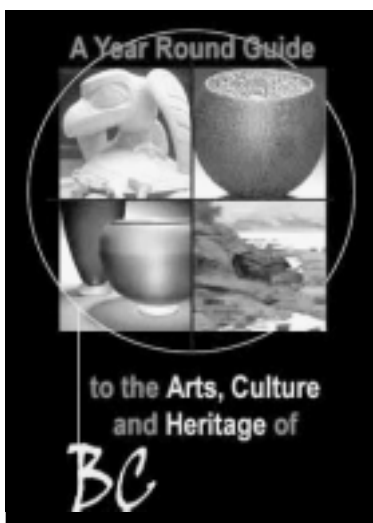
Also receiving a so-so review from *Lee* is the **Museum of Modern Art**

(**MOMA**), New York City ([www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org)). The site is dynamic when describing shopping opportunities, but “boring” and “stale”, when it comes to displaying the Museum’s collections. Nevertheless, a good feature is “a great collection of free art e-postcards.”

Fans of Canadian-born architect Frank Gehry will want to click on the **Guggenheim Bilbao Museum**, Bilbao, Spain ([www.guggenheim-bilbao.es](http://www.guggenheim-bilbao.es)). Probably the best feature is the section on the actual building; the depiction of the exhibits is text heavy.

Finally, the **National Museum of Modern Art**, Tokyo ([www.momat.go.jp/english\\_page/index\\_e.html](http://www.momat.go.jp/english_page/index_e.html)), has a site also noticeably lacking in images, but the art student might find its searchable database useful.

Of course, our virtual traveler might also decide to stay home and visit some of Canada’s top galleries and museums. Try the **National Gallery of Canada**, Ottawa ([www.nationalgallery.ca](http://www.nationalgallery.ca)) and click on CyberMuse for an indepth tour. Or, check out the **Vancouver Art Gallery** ([vanartgallery.bc.ca](http://vanartgallery.bc.ca)) and its big summer show, “Carr, O’Keefe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own”. The **Art Gallery of Greater Victoria** is at [aggv.bc.ca](http://aggv.bc.ca) and a number of **B.C. Interior** public galleries can be found at [www.galleries.bc.ca](http://www.galleries.bc.ca).



### FREE ART GUIDE

Continuing the summer travel theme, readers who are actually touring in B.C. will want to have a copy of the second annual *Art Guide to British Columbia*. The full-colour, 64-page booklet is a comprehensive, year-round guide that provides users with a road map to more than 200 art galleries, museums, artists’ studios, heritage sites, etc. around the province.

The web site at [www.art-bc.com](http://www.art-bc.com) contains everything in the guide, plus a regularly updated calendar of special arts events, workshops, and exhibitions. The guide itself is available, free, at Tourist Info Centres, on the Ferries, at many arts venues, or by sending \$5 for shipping/handling to Van/Dop & Associates, 421 Richmond Street, New Westminster, B.C. V3L 4C4. E-mail [artguide@telus.net](mailto:artguide@telus.net) for more information.

# ARTS ED IN THE NEWS

Student, *Sophie Isbister*, writing from Gladstone Secondary, in the *Vancouver Courier*, tells us that:

"At Gladstone, people love to dance. ...Approximately 200 students at Gladstone are taking dance as an elective. There are 22 students in the Dance Company, and an average of 25 students in each on-timetable dance class. Students have a variety of courses to choose from. We are the only school in the district that offers dance as an elective from Grade 8 through to Grade 12. ... The Dance Company, led by the dedicated Ms. Miller, puts on a variety of shows every year. This year, Ms. Miller is planning 14 different shows, both



big and small. These shows contain all kinds of dances, such as hip-hop, swing, Latin, New York jazz, African, and Hawaiian.

"...I had the good fortune to sit in

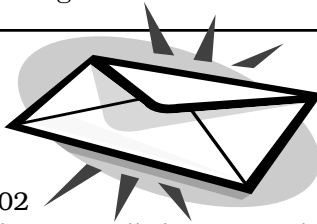
on a few minutes of a dance class. (It) was fast paced; if you step out for a break, the chance of missing important information is high. The pace and quality of teaching by Ms. Miller and Ms. Maretic is part of what makes Gladstone's dance department so unique, advanced, and talented. The other part of the talent is, of course, the dancers themselves.

"At Gladstone, and in today's culture, dance is important. Whether it helps you socially, physically, or emotionally, dance is a powerful force in the lives of not only dancers, but those who appreciate dance. (*The Vancouver Courier*, 11/25/01)

## LETTERS

*Michael Wilson*, of the University of Ottawa, writes:

"The 'Champions of Change' article (Spring 2002 Newsletter) made for interesting reading. While it is well documented in the research that positive learning experiences in the arts have many transfer benefits for learning other subject matter, and indeed, for adding to the quality of the general learning experience in schools, the ultimate value of the arts is in the inherent experiences in dance, drama, music, visual arts and other related artistic areas. The arts are worthy experiences for their own value alone. The current brain research that suggests that experiences in creativity and aesthetics develop uniquely, certain aspects of mental and emotional maturity and functioning, promises to validate arts involvement for the particular human nourishment that only those experiences provide."



**"Art does not  
reproduce what  
we see. Rather,  
it makes us see."**

— PAUL KLEE

PLEASE LEND YOUR SUPPORT TO ARTS IN EDUCATION

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP (\$50)

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP (\$15)

Association or Organization Name

Name

Address

Address

Postal Code

Postal Code

Contact Person, Name, Position

Phone No. (work) (home)

Phone No. Fax No. e-mail

Fax No. e-mail

Corporate and Individual Donations are Welcome. Please enclose fee with application. Make cheque payable to the Arts in Education Council (a registered non-profit society). Mail to Arts in Education Council, PO Box 62023, Arbutus RPO, #143 - 4255 Arbutus Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1Z1. Tax receipts will be issued. Your donation is very much appreciated.



# ARTS IN EDUCATION

N E W S L E T T E R

## ARTS IN EDUCATION COUNCIL OF B.C.

P.O. Box 62023, Arbutus R.P.O.

#143 - 4255 Arbutus Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1Z1

Co-Chairs: Ron Rumak, 604-713-5441, FAX 604-713-5443, email rumak@hudson.vsb.bc.ca

Morag Cuthbertson, 604-733-6562, FAX 604-736-6053, email moragc@unixg.ubc.ca

Or contact: Elizabeth Lane, 604-738-2552, FAX 604-738-2556, e-mail belane@istar.ca

### FALL 2002

THE ARTS IN EDUCATION  
NEWSLETTER

is published quarterly by the  
Western Council of  
Arts in Education Associations  
which functions as the  
Arts In Education Council of BC

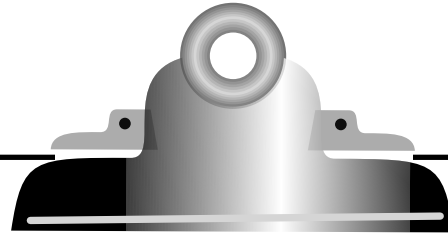
ISSN 1197-432X

### In This Issue

Notice of AGM .....	1
In the News .....	2
Editorial: <i>Where Have All the Specialists Gone?</i> .....	3
Coming Up .....	4

*"When we perceive the arts as  
"humanities" it is crucial that  
we interpret them as a  
demand that we pause, and in  
their light, reexamine our own  
realities, values, and  
dedications, for the arts not  
only present life concretely,  
stimulate the imagination,  
and integrate the different  
cultural elements of a society  
or of an epoch, they also  
present models for our  
imitation or rejection, visions  
and aspirations which mutely  
solicit our critical response."*

- ALBERT WILLIAM LEVI



# NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2002 Annual General Meeting  
of the

Arts in Education Council of B.C.  
will take place

**Wednesday, October 30, 2002**

From 4:30 to 6:00 pm

at

Henry Hudson Elementary School  
1551 Cypress Street, Vancouver

(If doors are locked, enter through the York Street daycare entrance)

4:30 pm Refreshments

5:00 pm Informal Discussion:  
*"Should the Arts in Education Council  
Re-examine its Role?"*

5:45 pm Annual General Meeting

**EVERYONE WELCOME!**

---

## IN THE NEWS

*Bits of inspiration and encouragement from all over....*

**Renee Rosnes**, internationally acclaimed jazz pianist, now performing and living in the U.S., returned to North Vancouver in June, to perform at the Capilano College Performing Arts Theatre, as part of the Vancouver Jazz Festival. Renee first developed her interest in jazz at Handsworth Secondary School in North Van, where her former band director, Bob Rebagliati, still teaches. She always thanks him in the liner notes to her CDs. "He had such a passion for jazz and was able to impart that to his students in a really wonderful way," she said to the Vancouver Courier's Chris Wong. "I think he was unique as a teacher because he made me aware of the whole tradition and history of the music when I was first starting to learn jazz." (*Vancouver Courier*, 23 June 2002)

Songstress, **Sarah McLachlan**, and **Arts Umbrella**, have joined forces to create the Sarah McLachlan Music Outreach, a program designed to give underprivileged kids free music lessons. In the first year of the program, 300 students from Mount Pleasant Elementary and Van Tech Secondary participated, attending classes in a donated space on the city's East Side. Arts Umbrella teaching staff have been instructing students in guitar, piano, choir and percussion since April 15. According to school administrators, McLachlan's music outreach has given students more than musical ability; it's made a dramatic difference to their confidence. "Many of the students are in a cycle of poverty that doesn't boost their self-esteem," said Mount Pleasant principal John Hall. "They feel very loyal and proud of their east side roots," said Van Tech principal Ken Annandale. "It gives them a chance to celebrate all that, while developing some incredible skills." Although McLachlan is the primary donor behind the project; the federal government is contributing a one-time grant of \$50,000. (*From article by Erin Gregg, The Vancouver Sun, June 15, 2002*)

"**The Silence of the Strings**" a documentary aired on NOW TV, Victoria, on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, eloquently described the fight to preserve the Victoria Elementary School Strings Program, a Herculean effort involving students, parents, some Victoria Symphony musicians, teachers, and the generosity of a local artist, J. Wright. The "day was saved" for one year, but we understand that since then, funding cuts have all but eliminated the program. Trudi Conrad, Victoria Symphony violinist who began on her instrument at Sir James Douglas Elementary, said "The program is all about *stewardship*, what we are doing to nurture" (the resource that is our young people). A young musician from the Festival Orchestra at Victoria High School put it succinctly –

"Talent just doesn't surface in Grade 8." The documentary noted that "the Ministry (of Education) mandates fine arts, but then doesn't provide the money for music, dance, and so on. It's only when you have opportunity, can the "light" go on, and how are we going to convince them to fund this opportunity?" How indeed.

**Take art courses – get job.** The expanding video game industry is producing many job prospects for those trained in visual and media arts. Companies such as Electronic Arts in Vancouver are part of a multi-billion dollar North American industry. Graduates from post-secondary art institutions are the new hires, and "it is traditional capabilities in illustration and animation...that earn the placements." Artists account for half of the staff in a typical game-producing studio. Visual artists develop the concept and storyboard, while modellers, compositing artists, texture artists and motion specialists all have a hand in what is a collaborative production. And it is not just the "gaming industry" that is hiring. Sheridan College (Ontario) has positioned itself at the forefront in the related use of technology, using the gaming technology to do scientific visualization, producing graduates who will work with

scientific staff at McMaster Health Sciences Centre in Hamilton. (*The Globe and Mail, Education Supplement, June 17, 2002*)

**Goodbye, Mr. Burger.** In a column entitled "A heartfelt thanks to all the good teachers", Deborah Jones of *The Vancouver Sun* paid tribute to a number of retiring teachers, including Dave Burger of Kitsilano Secondary in Vancouver, leaving the music room after 41 years of orchestrating an appreciation of music in legions of Vancouver students, at Lord Byng and Kits high schools. His philosophy is pretty simple – music is good for all the kids, not just the ones who are music-career bound. Some of his students, says Ms. Jones, did go on to professional music careers, but Mr. Burger never fooled himself that every one was a prodigy. "I'm not running a conservatory here. My goal is that students leave here loving music, and knowing more than they did when they came. And if they want, that they have the capability to pursue it."

In a political climate of bottom-dollar thinking, at a time nostalgic parents demand back-to-basics education, the retiring Mr. Burger finds himself indignantly defending music, an elective. "It's the fulfillment of the creative urge, which we all have," he says, "and it prompts higher levels of activity on both sides of the brain," thus enhancing students' activities in other areas. "And the real growth of these kids as people happens in the electives. They find out about themselves and the world we live in." (*The Vancouver Sun, June 17, 2002*)

**The Kootenay School of the Arts** has managed to rise from the ashes caused by the loss of provincial funding. The Nelson, B.C. post-secondary arts school has restructured and now will focus on the Craft and Design programs, and has reduced the number of studio classes being offered this fall. Mixed media and creative writing did not survive the axe, but it's good news that the school survives. Find out more at <http://www.ksac.bc.ca>

---

## EDITORIAL

# WHERE HAVE ALL THE SPECIALISTS GONE?

Sounds like an old song, doesn't it? And it is. As we all know, the elementary level specialist arts teacher has all but disappeared. Present financial constraints cannot take all the blame. The gradual demise has been going on for years. Unfortunately it's happening in a place where exposure to the arts is so important, the K-7 classroom. So much has been said and written about how important it is to "get them when they're young." As in learning a foreign language, skills and appreciation in the fine arts gained by the very young are there for life. It seems ironic that we now have the Fine Arts graduation requirement at the secondary level, fought for by so many advocates, while beginning students are rapidly losing exposure to the arts.

It's depriving young students and it's hard on teachers. Elementary teachers feel unprepared to teach K-7 music, for example, with the meagre two semester training course in the Education Faculty generalist program. The IRP mandates a knowledge of one or more pedagogies such as Orff, Kodaly, Band, Choral, and instruments like guitar, recorder and ukelele, a pretty daunting prospect for the young, non-musically trained teacher. It's virtually the same for the other fine arts. Bob Dalton, PhD, associate professor of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria, says visual art is given short shrift in elementary schools. "There are no art specialists and most teachers have taken only one course in university to make them artists."

So why can't something be done? We're mired in the old "vicious circle" lamented by the Arts in Education Council since its inception: No special arts training for teachers = no excellent fine arts in K-7 = few students turned on by the arts = few students becoming arts teachers, and on and on, around we go. J. Terry Gates, writing in the U.S. journal, *Arts Education Policy Review* (Vol.96, No.3, Jan/Feb 1995), goes so far as to say that we should be able to

identify children even in the primary grades who have that special combination of arts and communication/teaching skills: "We can do the same for teaching that we do for each of the arts—we can identify artistically advanced elementary school children who *also* have an aptitude for teaching, and we can develop *both* aptitudes at the same time." He then goes on to describe how to effectively nurture these future arts teachers. For example, "musical children with an aptitude for teaching, must begin keyboard lessons, undergo an accelerated development of their singing skill, and, if motivated, study a band or orchestra instrument. Children with an aptitude for dance must begin dance instruction, and so on." Gates describes a process of encouraging the budding arts teacher, that "takes nearly two decades to complete." It all presupposes a dedication by education administrators, to the teaching of specialized arts skills, in the early grades, in a highly professional manner. We can only dream.

As one might expect, much of the present problem is brought on by the diminishing bottom-line most school boards are forced to deal with. As we know, The College of Teachers does not recognize specialist teaching positions in elementary schools and therefore the universities no longer offer elementary specialist programs, because there are no jobs for their graduating students. For aspiring music teacher, Beth Jay, writing in *The B.C. Music Educator* (Spring 2002, Vol. 45, No.2), it's a big conundrum: "How to become an elementary music teacher, when there seems to be no straightforward path toward the goal, unlike at the secondary level where music is a recognized specialty." As well, she says, "finding a practicum placement with a music teacher seems to be virtually impossible, and only potentially possible by pleading with various faculty members?" The Ministry expresses strong theoretical support for the fine arts stream, but

seems unable to carry through, especially at the elementary level. As an anonymous Saanich teacher said in a recent article in *Boulevard* magazine (Sept/Oct 20), "There's so much frustration. Teachers are given ministry guidelines that consider the arts to be of great import. It's hypocrisy in my mind, because the arts are the first to go." "We're always fighting the cuts," says another Victoria teacher. "The province tells the school district to deal with the lack of funding and so the number of choices that the student can make is limited. We've worked really hard not to damage the arts in our schools." "School boards are in cutback mode," says Bill Zuk, PhD, Professor of Art Instruction at UVic, in the same article. "Maybe the people making the decisions have never experienced the way that arts can contribute to life. It's hard to create evolutionary change. I hope there will be an awakening, because if we cut out the arts we will become mediocre as a society."

There are, thankfully, many inspired examples of coping with the problem. *The B.C. Music Educator* cites an innovative music program offered to a cohort of approximately 30 teachers in the Coquitlam School District #43 from 1999-2001, in affiliation with UVic. "Diana Clark, an impassioned music specialist and District coordinator for music, convinced the Coquitlam Board that there was a need for music specialists and proposed a series of music education courses that would provide music specialists to serve the District's needs. The program was designed to be delivered on-site in the District on alternate Friday nights and Saturdays throughout five consecutive terms with a break for summer. At the end of 18 months, this group of teachers had taken ten music education courses encompassing music theory, foundations, history, and pedagogy. The teachers gained a step up on the salary grid (this was part of the agreement made with the District) and, most importantly, the

(continued on page 4)

## WHERE HAVE ALL THE SPECIALISTS GONE? *(continued from page 3)*

Coquitlam District had approximately 30 qualified music specialists. Ongoing professional development for elementary teachers is one way of addressing the problem. However, many teachers, particularly the beginning ones, find their workload already very demanding, and extra courses and study prove just too much.

In Victoria, Barbara Adams, teacher and artist-in-the-school coordinator at Monterey Elementary School, created a mentoring program that pairs local established artists with budding classroom-based artists. "It's my passion and I feel it's important," she said. And, the program is "self-perpetuating. We have never asked the government for money." The Parent Auxiliary Committee provided some start-up money; the program is now propelled by an annual fundraiser and exhibition. This year, the artists and students worked in tandem to generate permanent installations that depict the Oak Bay scene.

Many other examples abound. Nevertheless, coping is a short-term strategy that has somehow become a long-term reality in this province. Increased or redirected funding would certainly help. As UVic's Bob Dalton says, "The province should reconsider its policy of only hiring generalists. It wouldn't cost a lot to have specialists in schools." But underneath all of this is the question of values. The political and

philosophical will has to be there. We have the evidence – thousands of studies, statistics, scientific investigations, anecdotal experiences – and many, many fine teachers have the passion and enthusiasm. The fine arts matter and it's really best to start very young. As the young Victoria student said (see *In the News...*), "Talent doesn't just surface in Grade 8."

### References:

"The Arts in Jeopardy", by Maureen Licata, Victoria Boulevard, The Magazine of Urban Living, September/October 2002.

Various articles, The B.C. Music Educator, Journal of the British Columbia Music Educators, Vol.45, No.,2, Spring, 2002.

"Arts Teacher Education Reform: Recruiting a New Profession", by J. Terry Gates, Arts Education Policy Review, Vol. 96, No. 3, January/February 1995.

## COMING UP

### SOUNDWAVE 3

**The Annual Conference of the B.C. Music Educators' Association**  
**February 13 to 15, 2003**  
**at Sullivan Heights Secondary School, Surrey, B.C.**

**Some highlights:** Keynote speakers: Tommy Banks, "Canada's Jazz Ambassador"; Panel of Retired Music Educators featuring Betty Otke, Peter Stigings, Denis Tupman and Kerry Turner.

**Register Online:** [www.bctf.bc.ca/bcmea](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/bcmea)

**Inquiries:** [soundwave3reg.shaw.ca](mailto:soundwave3reg.shaw.ca)

### ArtScan Showcase 2003

**April 9 - 11, 2003**

**Vancouver**

Presented by ArtStarts in Schools, ArtScan is a 3-day arts showcase and conference for arts programmers interested in booking performances for young audiences. Educators wishing to attend can download an ArtScan Delegate Registration form in January, 2003. For more info right now, go to [www.artstarts.ca](http://www.artstarts.ca)

**PLEASE LEND YOUR SUPPORT TO ARTS IN EDUCATION**

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP (\$50)**

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP (\$15)**

Association or Organization Name

Name

Address

Address

Postal Code

Postal Code

Contact Person, Name, Position

Phone No.

(work)

(home)

Phone No.

Fax No.

e-mail

Fax No.

e-mail

Corporate and Individual Donations are Welcome. Please enclose fee with application. Make cheque payable to the Arts in Education Council (a registered non-profit society). Mail to Arts in Education Council, PO Box 62023, Arbutus RPO, #143 - 4255 Arbutus Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1Z1. Tax receipts will be issued. Your donation is very much appreciated.



# ARTS IN EDUCATION

N E W S L E T T E R

## ARTS IN EDUCATION COUNCIL OF B.C.

P.O. Box 62023, Arbutus R.P.O.

#143 - 4255 Arbutus Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1Z1

Co-Chairs: Ron Rumak, 604-713-5441, FAX 604-713-5443, email rumak@hudson.vsb.bc.ca

Morag Cuthbertson, 604-733-6562, FAX 604-736-6053, email moragc@unixg.ubc.ca

Or contact: Elizabeth Lane, 604-738-2552, FAX 604-738-2556, e-mail belane@istar.ca

### WINTER 2002

THE ARTS IN EDUCATION  
NEWSLETTER

is published quarterly by the  
Western Council of  
Arts in Education Associations  
which functions as the  
Arts In Education Council of BC

ISSN 1197-432X

## New Graduation Requirements...



### How Do They Affect Secondary Arts Education?

#### In This Issue

New Graduation Requirements ....	1
10 Lessons	
The Arts Teach .....	3
Arts Ed in the News .....	4

***“The arts teach children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships. Unlike much of the curriculum, in which correct answers and rules prevail, in the arts, it is judgment rather than rules that prevail.”***

— ELLIOTT EISNER  
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

The Ministry of Education has released its Discussion Paper outlining a series of proposals for a new Graduation Program, changes designed to “better support student achievement” and “improve the quality of public education.” These proposals, if implemented, will have a wide-reaching impact on the delivery of Fine Arts education at the secondary level. Our Council, other arts advocacy groups, the PSAs for all disciplines, as well as many private citizens, have some serious concerns about the directions described in the discussion paper. The Ministry has invited public comment; deadline is **December 13, 2002**.

You can go to the website at [http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/grad\\_req\\_rev/discussion/](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/grad_req_rev/discussion/) to read the discussion paper. You can also reply, on-line, to questions posed at the end of the document. Your submission should be sent by mail or e-mail to:

Susan Kennedy, Manager  
Student Transition Standards Branch  
Standards Department  
Ministry of Education  
P.O. Box 9184  
STN PROV GOVT  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9H9  
email: susan.kennedy@gems6.gov.bc.ca

The Arts in Education Council has responded to the Ministry’s questions as follows:

*(continued on pages 2 and 3)*

---

# NEW GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS *(continued from page 1)*

## **What is your overall impression of the proposed changes to British Columbia's Graduation Program?**

The Arts in Education Council of B.C., while not averse to change, or to a new look at the Graduation Requirements, finds some serious problems with the Ministry's plans as outlined in the Discussion Paper. What seem, on the surface, to be commendable ideas, present grave difficulties on further thought. For example, we commend the Ministry for wishing to introduce more "choice" and "flexibility", but find that implementation of many of the proposals would actually result in less of these qualities. We are pleased to see that "aesthetic literacy" is deemed a necessary competency for graduation, but then find little room for the student to explore and achieve this goal. The introduction of a Graduation Portfolio could be a valuable assessment tool and a specific goal for students, but at the same time, a complicated and labour-intensive exercise for teachers. We have serious concerns over the disappearance of Fine Arts 11, and additional trouble with the "Pathways of Concentration". We worry that the Fine Arts do not really enter into the Ministry's vision. Educators have worked extremely hard, for decades, to get the Fine Arts recognized as one of the four, equal strands of education. A lot of work has gone into getting FA11 into the graduating program. The current Fine Arts IRPs address all of the desired competencies in the Grad Profile. We accept that there is now a FA10, but having the arts requirement at this level is demoting its importance.

The Arts in Education Council feels that the overall sense of the new Graduation Requirements

diminishes the Fine Arts. The document does not reflect an understanding of the multiplicity of benefits accruing from having the Fine Arts as an integral part of the secondary school education. If we really want happy, productive, creative, responsible world citizens, goals outlined in the discussion paper, we need more, not fewer, Fine Arts courses in the system, K-12.

In the past twenty years, there have been hundreds, if not thousands of research projects demonstrating that the arts are critical to education and learning.

- The arts are an intellectual, academic discipline in that they involve literacy with complex symbol systems, just like language and math — "aesthetic literacy", in fact, one of the desired competencies for Graduation in the Ministry's discussion paper.
- The arts have great potential to enhance students' learning in other subjects. In the USA, students of the arts consistently outperform their non-arts peers in their SAT scores. Reading, writing and math skills show the influence of the arts in so many studies that some researchers refer to the arts as the "Fourth R".
- Many studies show that high-risk students, alienated ESL or "slow-learner" students, students with behavioural problems — all early drop-out candidates — do much better when involved in some aspect of the fine arts and tend to remain in school.
- The arts prepare students for jobs. The arts are a huge employer, and with a burgeoning computer technology — think of the myriad of applications for theatre, dance, music and visual arts — the number of arts-related jobs is increasing exponentially.

## **What do you think of the proposed changes in assessing student achievement?**

While the idea of a Portfolio sounds impressive, on careful thought we can see some potential problems. We do not see the Fine Arts mentioned anywhere in the six areas of achievement to be recorded in the Portfolio. (Although, as research shows us, study of any of the Fine Arts will enhance students' progress in all of these six areas). Further, we know that properly evaluating a Portfolio is a time-consuming job, which may tax already overworked teachers. How will schools manage this? When financially stressed School Districts are already short-staffed we wonder where the extra time will be found. And, proper and careful evaluation is essential if students are to take the exercise of portfolio development seriously.

## **What do you think of the proposals to provide more choice and flexibility for students to earn graduation credits?**

Choice and flexibility are admirable goals. We think students will respond positively to an effort to make their programs work individually for them. Many students will welcome the opportunity to get credit for courses offered electronically, or from sources outside the school. Locally developed courses are a good idea provided there is the time and manpower to write these courses. However, our Council is concerned that requiring schools to offer all three Grade 11 Maths courses, and add a Civics 11, may stretch smaller schools unduly, probably squeezing the arts as schools scramble to handle extra courses with fewer teachers. The Fine Arts could well suffer here.

---

## NEW GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS *(continued from page 2)*

The new compulsory PE11 and PE12 will actually give students less choice. We would recommend that they remain electives. The document proposes that by giving students more choice, they will stay in school to graduation. We agree, and would suggest that maintaining the Fine Arts 11 requirement would go far in ensuring that the Fine Arts remain choices available to senior students. Involvement in the arts is cited again and again by educators and students as a powerful influence in keeping kids in school and happy to be there.

### **What do you think of the proposals to expand education and career planning in order to better prepare students for the future?**

The eight Pathway Concentration Areas give the Arts in Education Council great concern, even though we see the arts in the “Fine Arts, Design, Media and Entertainment” category. The other seven areas would, presumably, have no reason, or capacity, to select a Fine Arts course in Grades 11 or 12. We find the “areas of focus” too focused and would say that although “students have the option of changing concentrations at any time”, this in fact would be very difficult to do. For arts-oriented students who also wish to attend university, the “Arts, Design...” Focus may well be impossible, as these students might not have enough elective space available after fulfilling the University Entrance Requirements.

We would also submit that age sixteen is young for students to “make decisions and choices that will affect them for the rest of their lives.” Encouraging students to “focus their efforts” at a very early age in particular career paths, in order to later fill areas where the

province has “critical skill shortages” may sound practical, but seems a narrow approach to the goals of educating well-rounded citizens. And, the “skill shortage” in the student’s Grade 10 may well have disappeared by Grade 12. As adults, we know that the “future” has become much less predictable on many levels – the successful graduate should have the tools and options to creatively deal with a changing world. Education in the arts gives students critical thinking, communication skills, problem-solving skills, and lifelong appreciation, abilities which go well beyond being “employable”. Specific skills are, of course, very important, but in reality, the required skill sets are changing all the time. In short, we see the proposed “choice” being limited, rather than expanded.

We suggest implementation of the “Pathway Concentration Areas” would prove very difficult for many

already stressed School Districts. Would all “Areas” be offered at all schools? It might be nearly impossible in smaller schools, and therefore equal access to all students would be compromised.

### **Recommendations**

Briefly, our specific recommendations would include:

- Continue the Fine Arts 11 as a graduation requirement
- Offer PE 11 and 12 as electives, not compulsory courses
- Be flexible and receptive to individual school interest and capacity with regard to the three compulsory math courses and the Civics 11 course
- Consider much more consultation on the “Pathways of Concentration” initiative. At very least, allow the four “Pathways” courses to be taken over three years, not two.

## **TEN LESSONS THE ARTS TEACH**

*(From Elliott Eisner, Stanford University)*

1. *The arts teach children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships. Unlike much of the curriculum, in which correct answers and rules prevail, in the arts, it is judgment rather than rules that prevail.*
2. *The arts teach children that problems can have much more than one solution and that questions can have more than one answer.*
3. *The arts celebrate multiple perspectives. One of their large lessons is that there are many ways to see and interpret the world.*
4. *The arts teach children that in complex forms of problem solving, purposes are seldom fixed, but change with circumstance and opportunity. Learning in the arts requires the ability and willingness to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities of the work as it unfolds.*
5. *The arts make vivid the fact that words do not, in their literal form or number, exhaust what we can know. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition.*
6. *The arts teach students that small differences can have large effects. The arts traffic in subtlety.*
7. *The arts teach students to think through and within a material. All art forms employ some means through which images become real.*
8. *The arts help children to say what cannot be said. When children are invited to disclose what a work of art helps them feel, they must reach into their poetic capacities to find the words that will do the job.*
9. *The arts enable us to have experience we can have from no other source and through such experience to discover the range and variety of what we are capable of feeling.*
10. *The Arts’ important position in the school curriculum symbolizes to the young what adults believe is important.*

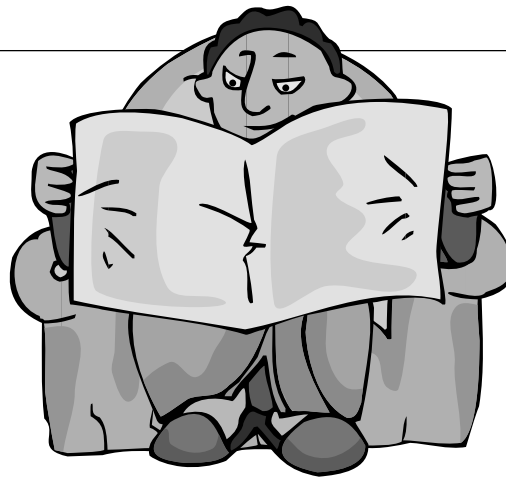
## ARTS ED IN THE NEWS

### Gray on Grad Requirements

*Globe and Mail columnist, John MacLachlan Gray, writing on the new Grad Requirements:*

“How is one to best prepare for the unknown? Is it by funnelling down a Pathway Concentration, based on current interests, peer pressure and world-view? By making a choice between thinking with the right brain and thinking with the left, at the visionary age of 16?

“This appears to be what the choice between Fine Arts and Applied Skills amounts to: Be a creative thinker, or be a problem-solver; be someone who comes up with new ideas, or be someone who works with someone else’s ideas. You choose. Right now.” (From a column entitled “*The way to the future is off the beaten path*”, *Globe and Mail*, November 19, 2002)



### Major National Study on Arts & Learning

At the conclusion of a three-year study, students in the Royal Conservatory’s *Learning Through the Arts (LTTA)* program score as much as 11 percentile points higher in math than their peers in non-LTTA schools, a Queen’s University study has found. Led by Dr. Rena Upitis and Dr. Katharine Smithrim of Queen’s, the study was designed to determine the effects of arts education on learning. In total, more than 6,000 students and their teachers were involved in the research.

“Arts education is not a cornerstone in many Canadian schools, and, indeed, in some schools virtually no arts instruction takes place,” says Upitis. “Many people assume that the arts somehow detract from the learning of other subjects, but this study shows that that isn’t the case. Time for the arts in school does not come at the expense of achievement in languages and math. In fact, we have evidence that the arts may help children do better in math, possibly because they are more engaged in school when arts are part of the curriculum.”

More on this survey in our next newsletter. For more information on LTTA, and the study, visit the website at [www.ltta.ca](http://www.ltta.ca)

PLEASE LEND YOUR SUPPORT TO ARTS IN EDUCATION

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP (\$50)

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP (\$15)

Association or Organization Name

Name

Address

Address

Postal Code

Postal Code

Contact Person, Name, Position

Phone No. (work) (home)

Phone No. Fax No. e-mail

Fax No. e-mail

Corporate and Individual Donations are Welcome. Please enclose fee with application. Make cheque payable to the Arts in Education Council (a registered non-profit society). Mail to Arts in Education Council, PO Box 62023, Arbutus RPO, #143 - 4255 Arbutus Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1Z1. Tax receipts will be issued. Your donation is very much appreciated.