



ARTS IN EDUCATION

N E W S L E T T E R

THE ARTS IN EDUCATION COUNCIL OF B.C.

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WE REST OUR CASE

Joanne Cram reports on arts education in the news, with input from Dennis Tupman, Elizabeth Lane and Janet Lee

Is it something in the air? 1999 has brought a veritable landslide of news items, research, and writing on the value of the arts in education. Newspaper articles, internet essays, TV interviews, books and surveys - everyone is telling us to get the kids involved in the arts, and the earlier the better.

Music education has been the focus of much attention in recent months. Chris Wong, writing in the Vancouver Courier (*February 14, 1999*), profiles the remarkable success of world music programs in several Vancouver schools. "Coming up with a precise definition of world music isn't easy", he writes. But, "despite the vagueness, world music has characteristics that distinguish it from traditional, European-based classical music. It's improvisational, usually unwritten, and community-based ...". It also often has real relevance to young students, as it's the basis of the type of music they listen to. Eric Hartman, a Grade 5/6 teacher at Capt. James Cook Elementary School, says his students "enjoy playing the music for reasons ranging from a profound feeling of accomplishment to the simple pleasure of making lots of noise." Valerie Dare, teacher-librarian at Britannia Secondary School, in collaboration with other teachers and local world-music artists, has developed a series of booklets that suggest activities teachers can use to introduce students to the music of specific cultures, as well as the geographic socio-political, folkloric and spiritual context. She sees participation in world music as a great tool in cultural understanding.

Again considering music education, it would appear that the recently published book "The Mozart Effect", by U.S. educator, Don Campbell, presents some compelling evidence that listening to certain kinds of music cuts learning time and increases retention of new material, as well as making creativity soar. The book has spawned a series of CDs/audiotapes, now being used by a wide variety of educational institutions and private corporations in the U.S. to accelerate creativity, reduce stress and increase concentration in classrooms and workplaces. In a study conducted at the University of California at Irvine (*Rauscher, Shaw and Ky, 1993*), 26 undergraduates in the Psychology Department scored 8 to 9 points higher on the spatial IQ reasoning subtest of the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale after listening to 10 minutes of Mozart's Sonata for Two Pianos in D Major, K. 448, as compared to taped self-hypnosis instructions or silence.

Early music training appears to be linked to higher performance across the educational spectrum. In 1996, the College Entrance Exam Board Service (U.S.) conducted a study on all students taking their SAT exams. Students who sang or played a musical instrument scored 51 points higher on the verbal portion of the test and an average of 39 points higher on math. And of course there is all the recent and widely reported research into "the brain sciences", which shows that music helps children form neural bridges from birth onward.

(continued on page 2)



**Music & The
Performing
Arts Elevate
Educational
Performance**

WE REST OUR CASE... (continued from page 1)

Fran Rauscher and Gordon Shaw (see above) conducted one test that showed that "piano instruction beat computer instruction in dramatically enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills - those needed for learning math and science ." (Suzanne Boynton, *New York Times*, quoted in the *Vancouver Sun*, Feb 26, 1999).

What about drama? The skills learned through acting build confidence and teach children how to listen, research, communicate and work with others, writes Karen Gram in a *Vancouver Sun* article (March 5, 1999).

At Westcot Elementary School in West Vancouver, development of children's creative self-expression is a five-year priority. Principal David Langmuir says, "there is plenty of evidence that a variety of performing arts programs benefit children. Besides developing metaphorical thinking ... it builds team work and communication skills. It also makes the learning more enduring, more meaningful, and allows (the children) to draw on their personal experiences." According to Elizabeth Ball, founder and artistic director of Carousel Theatre and School, teenagers in drama classes learn team skills, discipline, research skills and, a language-theatre jargon - which makes them feel part of a community.

Finally, another survey deals with an often overlooked function of arts education - that of building future "audiences" and ensuring that the arts remain a vital part of our communities. In the U.S., the National Endowment for the Arts studied "Effects of Arts Education on Participation in the Arts" (*NEA, Research Division Report #36*). The study asked some detailed questions about arts education's impact, taking into account socio-economic status, gender, race, ethnicity, as well as private vs. public education and arts education in the context of overall education. Of course, the findings were correspondingly detailed, but in essence, "those with the most arts education were also the highest consumers and creators of various forms of visual art, music, drama, dance, or literature". Curiously, arts *performance* (as opposed to *creation*), was the only type of arts participation that was not predicted by arts education despite the probable dominance of arts performance as a goal and instructional practice within arts education.

What are we to make of all this media and research attention? Ellen Winner and Lois Hetland, writing in the *New York Times* (March 9, 1999), caution us about "studying the arts for the wrong reasons", citing some of the studies mentioned above. They write: "Do (the) results justify the inference that listening to classical music will

lead to school success? Alas, they do not." The writers go on to say "The importance of listening to, and learning to play classical music, or for that matter engaging in any of the arts, is beyond dispute - but not because the experience will raise academic test scores. People who live by such practical rationalizations for the arts are in danger of having their position undermined should science not support these claims. We don't justify math in our schools by how well it improves musical ability. So why should we require such distant transfer effects in the case of music? Music, like math, physics and poetry, is an essential part of our culture. Children improve their future lives immeasurably by gaining a deep understanding of its structure and its beauty. This is justification enough for music in our schools."

From our viewpoint, it is cheering that the debate is going on out there. Like other issues on the "endangered list", arts education needs to be talked about in the public arena, not just to the already converted. It makes us feel optimistic when three *Vancouver* newspapers devote some major ink to arts in the schools, in a space of less than a month, or when Pamela Wallin dedicates a program to arts in education, interviewing artist Ken Danby and musician Marvin Hamlisch. The message from both of these gentlemen? This country needs some "decision makers" who have experienced the arts from a very early age, in the home, and

especially at school. We rest our case!

In a study of medical school applicants, 66% of music majors who applied to medical school were admitted, the highest percentage of any group. Only 44% of biochemistry majors were admitted.

- LEWIS THOMAS, as reported in *Phi Delta Kappan*, February 1994

At risk children who participated in an arts program that included music showed significant increases in overall self-concept.

- N.H. BERRY, Auburn University, 1992

Further reading:

"Effects of Arts Education on Participation in the Arts", NEA Publications, Executive Summary available at <http://204.178.35.192/pub/Researchcharts/Summary36.html>

The Mozart Effect Resource Centre, <http://www.mozarteffect.com/>

"Listening to Music Enhances Spatial Task Performance Design and Procedure" study by Rauscher, Shaw and Ky available at http://www.namm.co/mktdv/mktdv_mecr.shtml

"Music for the Mozart Effect", CDs and audiotapes available at <http://www.howtolearn.com/Mozart.html>

"Confidence is no act for drama-class kids", Gram, K., the *Vancouver Sun*, March 5, 1999.

"Drumming culture into our kids", Wong, C., the *Vancouver Courier*, February 14, 1999

"Music to parents' ears", Boynton, S., *New York Times*, quoted in the *Vancouver Sun*, February 26, 1999

"Studying the arts for the wrong reasons", Winner, E & Hetland, L., *New York Times*, March 4, 1999.

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...

The November Video Conference Meeting of the BCAA E inspires Morag Cuthbertson

Although video conferencing technology may have its problems, it proved its worth on a stormy Friday in November when participants would have been unusually challenged to come together. All in our cosy little corners around the province, we listened and talked with each other and exchanged news and ideas.

Being out of the loop, I was somewhat at sea even without the ferry ride, struggling to interpret IRPs, PSAs, LSAs and so on. That, however, didn't stop me from getting the message loud and clear that too little has changed since I first came to this land, lo these many years.

The last time I looked, there was not a country in western civilization that had not researched and concluded that the Fine Arts, *when well taught*, enhance learning and development in all areas and enrich the lives and souls of students. Alas, few have followed through. The same questions continue to be debated. If teachers are the product of the system, the WHO, the WHERE and the WHEN must be addressed.

WHEN: At the conference the dire phrase "sneaking the arts in" reared its ugly head again. In a crowded curriculum, in a society which insists that schools undertake responsibility for the academic, social and psychological needs of its future citizens, WHEN has been compressed into the Christmas Concert and the Spring Display, a quickie mix of art, drama and music. These are important experiences for the school community; they are certainly excellent PR, but, they are no substitute for education in discrete subject areas.

WHERE: With a burgeoning school population and the consequent shortage of space, WHERE becomes a crucial question. If it is hard to clear space in one's own classroom for the Fine Arts lessons, I can attest that it is a nightmare to teach in a friend's primary classroom with floor to ceiling displays, blackboards filled with important stuff and the floor space a clutter of 'stations' and desks grouped for team research.

WHO: But it is the WHO which must exercise us most. After all, teachers are a product of the system, a system which we recognize as flawed. Would society be content to have English taught by teachers who had never learned to read or write but had been 'exposed' to it and its pedagogy for twelve or thirty hours during teacher training? Of course not!

Content and pedagogy exchange values as we move up and down the grades. It is therefore necessary that we increase specialization between Primary, Elementary and Secondary. One teacher may teach all levels, but teacher training must be specific, and performance de-emphasized.

Society cannot continue to kid itself that one *in loco parentis* teacher can adequately cover language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, music,

art, dance and drama (these last with a mere twelve or thirty hours of background and training)! Specialists are necessary at every level, and, none more than in the early grades. There are stockpiles of research from the Jesuits on, that recognize that the early years are the vital ones, when neural pathways can be established and vastly extended. By the age of ten, we have lost the battle if not the war. Yet we leave it till the upper elementary and especially the secondary to provide the space, the equipment, the specialists and the budgets. Why do we do this? It is backside foremost.

POSITIVES: Forty-four years ago when I came to Canada, my colleagues were grade twelve graduates with one year of teacher training. They were marvellous people, but sadly ill-prepared. Those days are gone, thank heaven.

The concern in the profession and the enormous energy and effort in pushing for solutions and

improvements are wonderfully encouraging. We heard of:

- The Surrey/SFU collaboration to provide in-service to general classroom teachers "Exploring the Fine Arts" (thirty hours, once weekly)
- UVic's teleconferencing courses for teachers of grades five to seven
- Fine arts finally recognized for graduation
- Specialist associations offering workshops
- Nanaimo's leadership in summer and evening workshops, art kits
- Kamloop's resource packages, curriculum organization, artists-in-residence programme
- The Langley Film Course - Rogers Cable partnership
- and myriad others

But, as ever, it is the heroic efforts of individual teachers, and students, which amaze and inspire us and give us hope. They work shocking hours sharing inadequate facilities and are gloriously hardworking and creative in finding funds (which the new IRPs don't) for their specialist needs.

When all is said and done, it is the teachers who make the difference and it is to their advancement, in every way, that we must put our efforts. Give them the training, the tools and the time and they will do the job.

Thank you to the organisers of the November 20, 1998 BCAA E video conference at Burnaby for opening my eyes and ears and giving me heart to keep on trying to help.

Since emigrating from Scotland, Morag Cuthbertson has taught music first at the primary school level and subsequently at the Vancouver Academy of Music (all levels) for 14 years, and at Vancouver Community College (first and second year university transfer students) for 15 years.

The very best engineers and technical designers in the Silicon Valley industry are, nearly without exception, practicing musicians.

- GRANT VENERABLE,
The Centre for the Arts
in the Basic Curriculum,
New York, 1989.

BEATING THE DRUM FOR MUSIC EDUCATION: AN INTERVIEW WITH SAL FERRERAS

Kim Urhahn interviewed Sal Ferreras in February

Did you know that children who study the arts do 46% better in other school subjects? With the new found interest Canadian people have in world music, what better vehicle to introduce kids to the arts? In a recent interview with Sal Ferreras, a university world music and percussion instructor, I learned many of the benefits of educating children in the music of other cultures.

With the rise of the Internet and Prime Time Global News we have, indeed, become a global village. It is important to prevent prejudice and ignorance in our children. We need to educate youth and show them that other cultures have fun and interesting aspects too. Music is one way of putting all of this possibly confusing information into a comprehensible and enjoyable way for kids to learn. World music also allows children from outside the North American culture to feel that their heritage is accepted as part of the mainstream.

In the current public elementary school system there are little or no requirements for teachers in either the fine or performing arts. Sal Ferreras says, "when kids enter high school their level of musical knowledge can frequently be nothing." In light of the recent scientific discoveries linking the arts taught at an early age and higher grades in other subjects, many hope that these valuable skills will make their way into mandatory elementary school teaching. It is very easy for current elementary school teachers to expand their knowledge of music in other cultures. There is much information available over the Internet and Britannia Secondary School has an instructional resource centre with Valerie Dare, a specialist on educating in world music at the elementary level. For teachers-in-training many local universities and colleges offer a variety of ethnomusicology and world music courses: the University of Victoria, the University of British Columbia, Capilano

College and the King Edward Campus of Vancouver Community College, to name some. Simon Fraser University even offers an evening class, taught once a week at the Harbour Centre Campus by Sal Ferreras himself.

Do you remember those piano classes you took as a kid? That dance class you tripped through? It is proven that by studying the arts, children under the age of ten create new neurological pathways in their brains. By increasing the number of these pathways one increases one's overall intelligence. Almost all of these pathways are formed before a child reaches the age of ten and are broken down when not used. It is important to expose children to the arts in some form and to do it when they are young. And why music? By playing an instrument or learning a musical skill one forces both sides of the brain to work cooperatively: the right side to creatively play the music and the left side to logically manipulate an object. This creates pathways not only within each side of the brain but also from one side to the other. Playing music is one of the few activities that force the brain to work this way.

Above all of this technical jargon, kids really enjoy learning music. Ferreras says that he has found nothing that turns kids on like world music and percussion. He hopes that one day kids will feel comfortable enough to approach resources like their schools and community centres in order to gain access to world music instruments. It would be ideal if they could form ensembles outside of the normal band and choir classes, for example, why not a chamber ensemble or a banjo and tuba duet? Maybe the money your school spent on those bongo drums and tambourines was well spent.

Kim Urhahn is the first graduate of Vancouver Community College Music Department's "Latin and Brazilian Percussion Program", a 2-year diploma course.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

RE: Technology and Secondary Arts Programs Winter 1998 Newsletter

"There is no compulsory instruction in modern music technology (for example, in using composition software), either in the Bachelor of Music program or in one-year educations program". (attributed to Frank Ludwig)

At the risk of sounding like a "broken record" (old technology), I would like to remind mainland residents interested in arts education, that there is a University of Victoria and that the University of Victoria offers a highly successful B. Ms. in Secondary Music Education. The predilection of some rather vocal music educators on the mainland to assume that what happens at UBC and SFU represents the "universities" results in erroneous claims such as those made by Mr. Ludwig. For example, unlike what Mr. Ludwig suggests in the quote above, our secondary music education program is an integrated one in which teacher education begins in year 2 of the

Bachelor of Music, not in the post degree "education program". Our approach allows students time to develop a better understanding of what it means to be a teacher and time to develop as teachers.

Even more to the point of the article "Technology and Secondary Arts Programs", in addition to providing "traditional music teachers who specialize in band" (is there something inherently wrong with nurturing valid traditions?) UVic offers a compulsory course in "modern music technology"; it is called ME 402, Computers in Music Education. I cannot speak for the other universities but I can assure Mr. Ludwig that the new technology is given a place in the UVic music education program.

*Betty Hanley, Chair,
Arts in Education, University of Victoria*



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SUMMER 1999

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ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAMS INSPIRE THE WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Enthusiastic response from two schools demonstrates that "artist-in-residence" programs are a real inspiration for more than just the students. First, a report from Cameron MacKay-Stotesbury a Grade VI student at Myrtle Philip Community School in Whistler, B.C.

Marion Rose Gets Everyone Dancing

by Cameron MacKay-Stotesbury

One week this spring, Marion Rose came to my school (Myrtle Philip Community School at Whistler) to teach the kids dancing. I thought that her dancing/P.E. class was amazing. All of the students enjoyed it although they would probably like it even more if it was modern dance instead. Although I don't see any real-life application for the dances she taught us other than a square-dance or something, I'm sure we will all remember what we were taught and be glad we were in the program just for the confidence gained in dancing.

Some of the stuff we learned was: promenade position, grand march, square dance, strip-the-willow and something else that I forget. Marion is a great accordion player. She took one class at a time during our P.E. classes until every class had learned a different dance. The whole school then had a dance at 7:00 pm where the kids got to teach the parents what they learned. The day after that, right after lunch, we had a dance to show the school what each class had learned.

Marion Rose is a very enthusiastic and almost eccentric dance teacher. She plays an accordion with a great amount of skill and was well liked by everyone in our class. I think that the program was great and a really good idea.

Hands-On Arts at Osler Elementary

The creative spirit was alive and well at Vancouver's Osler Elementary this past April. Pat Johnson, Staff Writer with the Courier newspaper, describes an artist-in-residence program which brought six artists to the school for six sessions each. (The school district paid for one visiting artist; parent fund-raising financed the other five).

Johnston writes:

"When Brigitte Potter-Mael goes into a classroom to teach kids about hands-on art, she brings her most important tool: *passion*. 'When you get excited about something, that's when you start to learn.'

At Osler Elementary, she raised the excitement level with an art-meets-

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**Artists
inspire school
communities!**

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAMS...

(continued from page 1)

science class. Students learned about fish and invertebrates by depicting them in various media, including charcoal sketching and painting. In the end, the class laminated the art onto a canvas quilt with 27 panels each with a type of animal identified by its Latin name and the name of the student-artist. The 28th and centre panel is a group photograph of the artist, the teacher and the students.

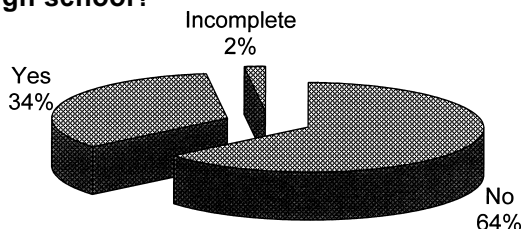
"One of the other artists in the program, Alison Diesvelt, has worked for 14 years with children through the Vancouver Art Gallery's outreach programs, as well as in school board-sponsored initiatives like this one. Diesvelt, whose specialty is drawing and painting, led kids on an Inuit print-making project and depictions of the rainforest animals of Peru, tying the artwork neatly into the class curriculum.

"The six artists introduced the students to media including silk painting, glass work, choreography, architecture and ceramics."

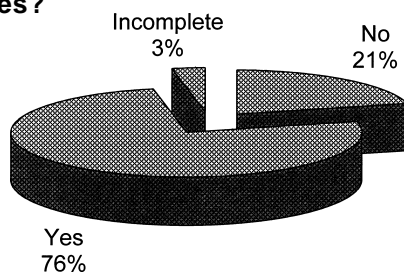
The artwork, also including dramatic pieces, dance and music created during the program, was exhibited at the school on April 21, giving the children a chance to show their work to parents and friends.

(Source: *The Courier*, April 1999)

Was this your first Fine Arts course taken in high school?



If Fine Arts were given credit for University entrance, would you take more Fine Arts courses?



Two of the results from over 1000 completed questionnaires received. More to come in the fall.

BCATA CONFERENCE 99

RENAISSANCE 99 - CELEBRATING THE CREATIVE SPIRIT

Pat Hindmarch-Watson Reminisces

A whole year has passed since the 1998 mega-conference - "Crossing Boundaries". It was there that teachers of Music, Dance, Drama, and Visual Art came together, crossed over and celebrated their common strengths, problems and aspirations for the arts in education. Last year, *strength* came from being together but I think *joy* came at this year's conference, "Renaissance 99", from the immersion into the visual arts.

The keynote speakers, Dr. Annie Smith and Dr. Peter London, thrilled and inspired us with their energy and creative spirit. Dr. Smith, known for her unique experiential approach to art history, entertained us with what I remember to be a much drier subject when I was in school. She started by singing "From a Distance" and she caught us and showed us how to connect to the past through art, making it live and have relevance to today. A live, Grade 4 student performance in English, Italian and French told the story of the Renaissance painting by Uccello of "The Battle of San Romano." A fashion show featured students modelling Renaissance period clothing created from found materials and plastic bags, all colour and texture, right down to the shoes.

There was so much to choose from as each session was rich with workshops. The introduction into visual journals was not the old sketchbook or the diary but the visual journey of one's own development - responses, dreams, images, both personal and shared. Immersion in theme - ideas explored, materials explored - should be, as Kit Grauer explained, "a bank - your Bank where you invest yourself, recorded to later draw on your wealth".

I attended a session on the role of the Art Museum in education, given by Pat Bovey, then Director of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. The wealth of materials available to teachers on slides and disc was outstanding. Again, all subject areas could be bridged through the study of art. Poor communication, overlapping, and lack of use of these resources by the Education Ministry became evident as a dilemma the galleries and museums share. Each year thousands of students benefit from the school programs. Teachers who use these resources should let the Ministry know how valuable they are.

Dr. Peter London drew us in on Saturday morning in an address entitled "Towards A Holistic Paradigm for Art Education: Only Connect." He said if we are to reach our full potential we must engage mind, body

(continued on page 2)

BCATA CONFERENCE...

(continued from page 2)

and spirit, to move to where everything matters, not a thing more, not a thing less." Reaching full potential is something we cannot and should not limit. We get caught up in what we are expected to do, to follow reasoned ideas of others. Teachers must create a balance of mind, body and spirit. Like Dr. Eisner last year, Dr. London expressed concerns about evaluation and the pressure we all feel to measure art education using the same methods used in other subjects. He said it does not work. They are not the same.

Conferences are like roller coasters and the speed at which the ride is over is just as similar. There was so much to grasp, to meet, to listen, to talk, to be, at this year's conference that I am sure most people went away with heads spinning and with their world at least a little, if not a whole lot, shaken.

Pat Hindmarch-Watson is Chairperson of the Arts in Education Council of B.C. And a former elementary school art teacher.

IN THE NEWS

The "Arts Notes" section of the Georgia Straight recently reported on a "rare" meeting of North America's two arts-funding heads, on May 7 in Vancouver.

"Reaching young audiences emerged as the foremost cultural challenge for both the U.S. and Canada. **Bill Ivey**, Chairman of America's National Endowment for the Arts, and **Shirley Thomson**, Director of the Canada Council for the Arts, appeared together at the Opera America Conference.

'Establishing value has been the biggest single issue facing the arts in the history of the U.S., and it's crucial that young citizens connect with art,' said Ivey, who plans to use a forthcoming US \$50-million increase in the NEA budget to launch an initiative to promote the arts to communities, schools, and youth. Thomson said she envied the NEA's ability to reach students through school curricula; hampered by legislation that gives provinces jurisdiction over education, the federal council has had to find indirect routes, such as sponsoring the creation of works for young people.

Thomson did have a concern, however: 'The danger is, with limited budgets, to watch that we don't become a social-service agency, in which case we'll quickly lose our commitment to excellence.' Ivey seemed to disagree: 'By inserting money in those places, you're nurturing the environment from which excellence springs.'

(Source: Georgia Straight, May 13, 1999)

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

Draw Me A Story

An Illustrated Exploration of Drawing as Pre- and Post-Literate Language for teachers of grades K-12

by Bob Steele

This illustrated book reintroduces the reader to children's drawings. Just as spoken and written language exist to convey meaning, so children's drawings - from crude to very detailed - are rendered to "say something". In fact, in a drawing, children can capture degrees of sophistication in perception, understanding, and emotion far beyond their literacy level. The author shows how teachers and parents can begin to recognize the authenticity of drawing-as-language. As much as the written and spoken word, drawings are products of the child's imagination, attempts to make sense of the world, artifacts from a busy mental life. Given the opportunity, children's drawings progress from pre-school scribbles to individual representations of complex "stories". The author believes that drawing is a language in its own right. Available from:

Peguis Publishers
100 - 318 McDermot Ave
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3A 0A2
toll free 1 800 667-9673
email: books@peguis.mb.ca
\$18 + shipping and handling

ArtStarts Guides for Artists and School Presenters

ArtStarts have issued their "yellow pages" for artists and presenters - the *Guide to Presenters of Schools & Family Events* and 1999 edition of the *Artists Directory* respectively. The first time *Guide* offers artists more than 100 pages of invaluable information about all 59 school districts, including arts policies and budgets, contact names, school statistics, tips on weather conditions and travel access. The updated 1999 *Artists Directory* provides descriptive listings for over 250 artists providing shows, visits, and hands-on programs for young people. Both publications feature resource sections, and handy indexes that allow information to be easily located. Each book costs \$26.75, including GST and shipping; to order, contact

ArtStarts
Suite 401, 88 East Pender Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6A 3X3
phone 604 683-0501 in Vancouver or
phone toll free 1-888-878-7144
website: www.artstarts.com
email: artstarts@bc.sympatico.ca

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 5 to 9

Beginner Video Production for Secondary Teachers

Langley

contact: Dawne Tomlinson
 phone: 604 530-2141
 email: dawne_tomlinson@bc.sympatico.ca

July 12 to 16

Intermediate Video Production for Secondary Teachers

Langley

contact: Dawne Tomlinson
 phone: 604 530-2141
 email: dawne_tomlinson@bc.sympatico.ca

July 8 to 10

Congress '99: Educating Active Citizens

- providing an opportunity for dialogue and reflection on the role public education plays in nurturing our growth as a nation and as individuals

Hosted by the Canadian Education Association and Canadian School Board Association in association with the BCSTA

Victoria Conference Centre

information: Nancy Lagana 604 734-2721
 email: nlagana@bcsta.org
 or Denise Lauziere 416 924-7721 Ext 237
 email: lauziere@acea.ca
 or Sandra Wood 613 235-3724
 email: admin@cdnsba.org

August 23 to 24

Art and Drama in the K-7 Classroom Implementing the K-7 Fine Arts IRP

Co sponsored by the Vancouver Island Regional Planning Team; Ministry of Education's Field Services and Career Programs; UVIC Continuing Studies, UVIC Arts in Education; and Greater Victoria, Sooke, Saanich, and Cowichan Valley School Districts. University of Victoria

information: Bernice Wood 250 721-7871
 registration: Lorna McRae 250 721-6192

August 23 to 27

Winslow Summer Performing Arts Institute Fine Arts K-7 IRP Implementation Coquitlam School District

contact: Diana Clark, Fine Arts Coordinator
 phone 604 936-0491
 email: dclark@schdist43.bc.ca

March 18 to 22, 2001

The World of Children's Choirs - 2001

A International Festival and Symposium to be held in Vancouver

Sponsored by the B.C. Choral Federation and supported by the International Federal for Choral Music, International Society for Music Education, the Association of Canadian Choral Conductors, the Canadian Music Centre, the Arts in Education Council of B.C., and Yamaha Canada Music Ltd

information: Morna Edmundson
 16366 96 Ave, Surrey, B.C. V4N 2C1
 phone 604 589-2300
 email: morna@portal.ca

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ARTS IN EDUCATION

N E W S L E T T E R

THE ARTS IN EDUCATION COUNCIL OF B.C.

c/o 837 Davie Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1B7

Chairperson: Pat Hindmarch-Watson, phone (604) 228-9589, FAX (604) 228-8443, e-mail: phw@axionet.com

Contact: Elizabeth Lane, phone (604) 738-2552, FAX (604) 738-2556, e-mail: belane@istar.ca

FALL 1999

THE ARTS IN EDUCATION
NEWSLETTER
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"Architecture for Kids

provides our
children with a
view of society
and of thinking to
which they would
otherwise not be
exposed."

P.D. Bouchard, Principal
West Bay Elementary School
West Vancouver

**"We shape our buildings,
thereafter they shape us."**

Winston Churchill

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1999 Annual General Meeting
of the
Arts in Education Council of B.C.
will take place
Monday October 18th, 1999
from 4:00 to 5:30 pm
at the
Architectural Institute of B.C.
Suite 100 - 440 Cambie Street
Vancouver

GUEST SPEAKER

**Jim Taggart, Coordinator
Architects in Schools Program**

4:00 Refreshments
Annual General Meeting

4:30 Talk by Jim Taggart

Everyone Welcome

For information, call 228-9589



B.C. ARTS AND CULTURE WEEK NOVEMBER 1 TO 7, 1999

The B.C. Arts Council will celebrate the arts during the first week in November. Arts in education is a strong component of this first ever Arts and Culture Week.

ArtsStarts will coordinate showcases of some of the best arts programs and artists in education initiatives in school districts all around the province. The call went out last June for schools to respond (by October 8) with their ideas for performances, exhibitions, tours, assemblies or general arts awareness days.

Activities planned include: tours by Trustees of student mural projects; choir and band concerts; a soup lunch served in student-made ceramic bowls; an arts time-capsule commemorating the millennium, exhibits of masks and other art works.

ArtsStarts will be publicizing these events and accomplishments throughout B.C. The goal is to bring decision-makers' attention to the strong benefits of the arts in the school system by



highlighting some of the truly wonderful projects going on in many of our schools.

To find out more, call Gwen Kallio at (604) 215-2345 or email at gkallio@ican.net.

ArtsSmarts – A New National Initiative

In 1998, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation launched ArtsSmarts, a program to promote active cross-curricular student engagement in the arts in schools across the country. Susan Annis, Coordinator of ArtsSmarts, says that:

“... through very generous commitment to funding projects which ‘assist schools and their communities to promote enhanced learning outcomes through the arts’, literally thousands of Canadian children and youth will actively experience the arts in ways they may never have been able to without ArtsSmarts assistance.”

Rather than engaging in direct funding of the projects as it normally would, the McConnell foundation is acting through a network of partners in communities across Canada. The Canadian Conference of the Arts is acting as secretariat for the program (in B.C., ArtsSmarts is the chosen partner).

The ArtsSmarts objectives which help to guide the choices of these partners are:

- A. To build long-term, local partnerships that link young people, artists or arts organizations, schools, and the broader community;
- B. To enable schools to explore ways to integrate arts-related activities throughout the curriculum;
- C. To encourage students to develop their intellectual and communication skills through active participation in the arts; and
- D. To enhance appreciation of the importance of culture and the arts, thereby encouraging long-term support for Canadian artists and arts organizations.

It is hoped that this commendable initiative of the McConnell Foundation will address some of the arts in the schools deficiencies caused by education budget cutbacks.

For more information on projects in B.C. receiving ArtsSmarts funding, call ArtsSmarts at (604) 878-7144.

ARCHITECTS IN SCHOOLS PROGRAM

In 1997, the Arts in Education council was pleased to assist the Architectural Institute of B.C. in obtaining funding from the Samuel and Saidye Bronfman Family Foundation to launch the second phase of the Architects in Schools Program. The first phase, "Architecture for Kids" has brought understanding of our built environment to more than 15,000 elementary students and 600 teachers province-wide.

In his introduction to the 80-page Resource Guide (author, Carol Arnston, MAIBC), Program Coordinator Jim Taggart (MAIBC) says:

The study of architecture and the built environment develops many important learning skills: creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, cross-disciplinary applications, and cooperative learning. Moreover, it does so using the immediate physical environment of school, neighbourhood and city as a laboratory, which is accessible, relevant and fun.

With an understanding of the processes that shape our built environment, our future citizens will be better equipped to be actively involved in making positive changes to their physical world.

"Architecture for Kids" is a cross-disciplinary resource for teachers that uses a hands-on approach to address many of the learning outcomes prescribed by the Ministry of Education for K-7 students. The Program is not intended to be an introduction to architecture as a career, but rather to raise students' perceptions about how the built environment embodies our visions of the world and our place in it.

Now, following upon the great success of the elementary program, the AIBC is developing Phase 2, a curriculum for Grades 11 and 12 in the secondary school system. "Design and the Built Environment" (author, Carol Arnston, MAIBC) is the working title of the Resource Guide now being tested in classrooms. The course is presented in four sections:

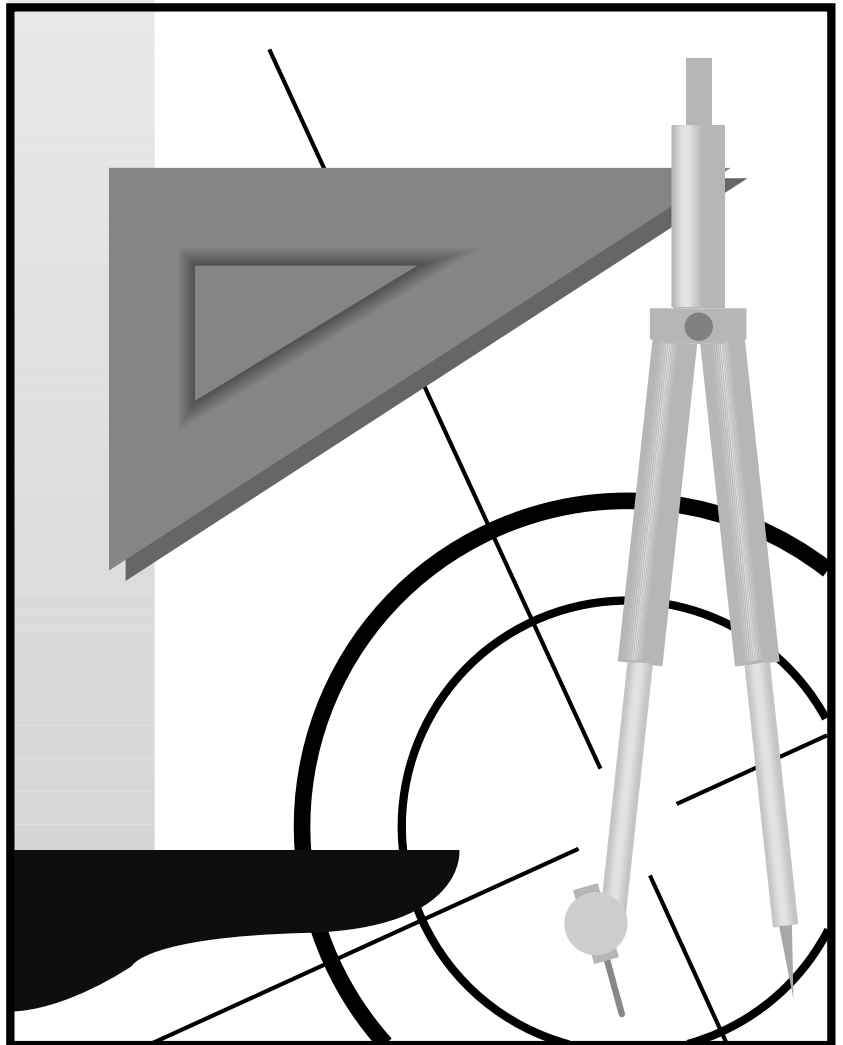
Design Conception: Questions such as "What is design?" and "Why do we design?" are answered here. Students may visually demonstrate "concept" using sketching, photography, collage or multi-media.

Tools for Representation and Communication of Ideas: Developing a design idea beyond the concept stage using formal, technical tools to explore and elaborate. Drawing techniques, computer applications, perspective and modelling will be studied.

Design Influences: A design project must be responsive to more than the designer's egocentric expression of personal ideals. There are design influences of place and time, which continue to refine and shape the final product. Students will study the impact of heritage and culture, climate, geography, construction technologies of other cultures.

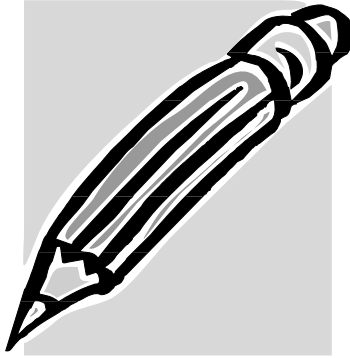
Applied Design: Design decisions embrace every human activity, and profoundly affect the natural order and the built order of our environment. Real applications in several disciplines, such as interior design, landscape design, building design, and urban design, are explored.

It is hoped that Phase 2 will be ready for launch at the B.C. Art Teachers' Association Conference in February 2000. For information about the Architects in Schools Program, call Jim Taggart at (604) 683-8588. And, please note, everyone is welcome to attend the Arts in Education Council's AGM, at which Jim Taggart will speak about the Program (details on page 1 of this newsletter).



AND THE SURVEY SAID ...

Our Fine Arts (Secondary) Questionnaire brought many student comments to the question:



As a result of taking this Fine Arts course do you have a clearer understanding of the potential value of Fine Arts subjects?

- Fine arts makes my brain work in different ways. I love the creative process.
- Yes, it has allowed me to experiment with my "artistic side" which I can apply in later life.
- Yes, I know how to express what's in my mind, and make it more interesting.
- Yes, it's interesting, I like art but my mom wants me to go to university and to be a business person.

Watch for more in the next newsletter.

CALENDAR

November 1-7, 1999

B.C. Arts and Culture Week

(See item in this newsletter.) Listen to David Grierson's North by Northwest program on CBC 1 during this week to hear some student voices in "The Rant", a 2-3 minute monologue (think Rick Mercer) and in "NeoStatic", a 7-minute radio play.

Saturday, February 5, 2000

"The Basics": The Nuts and Bolts of Working as an Artist in Schools.

Presented by ArtsStarts. A day-long professional development opportunity for artists with little or no classroom experience. Cost: \$50.00.

Info: ArtsStarts (604) 878-7144.

February 17-19, 2000

Regensis: B.C. Music Educators' Association Annual Conference.

Location: Robert McMath Senior Secondary School, Richmond, B.C. Mission Statement: "At the end of this millennium..." Early Bird Registration Deadline: January 15, 2000.

Info: <http://www.bctf.bc.ca/bcmea> or call (604) 882-9561

March 18-22, 2001.

The World of Children's Choirs - 2001.

An international festival and symposium and trade fair. To receive info re registration, write Morna Edmundson, 16366 96th Ave, Surrey, B.C. V4N 2C1, or <http://www.wocc2001.org>

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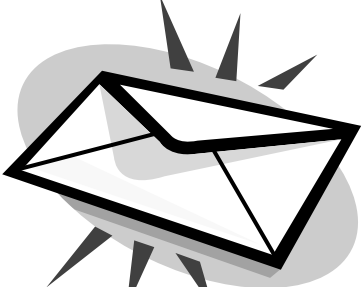
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In This Issue

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Change of Address 1
Fine Arts 11 Requirement:
A Step Forward 1

IMPORTANT NOTICE



CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Effective immediately, the
new mailing address for the
Arts in Education Council
of B.C. will be:

Suite 201
3737 Oak Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V6H 2M4



Fine Arts 11 Requirement

— A STEP FORWARD —

The Arts in Education Council's survey of a cross-province sample of B.C. high school students indicates that despite difficulties such as timetable problems and limited offerings in some schools, the new Fine Arts graduation requirement is seen as a good thing. In this Newsletter, we describe how we conducted the survey, and report on a selection of its interesting findings. The complete data, in all its statistical glory, will be available for mailing out in the new year (see the end of the article for details).

BACKGROUND

As a result of *A Legacy for Learners: The Report of the Royal Commission on Education* (1988), a new political curriculum was developed which included a graduation requirement of a minimum of two credits of Fine Arts at the Grade 11 or 12 level. Students may select an existing four-credit provincial course in one of the four disciplines of drama, dance, music or visual art, or the new two-credit Fine Arts 11, first implemented in 1995. They may also select from one of the approved four-credit provincial applied skills courses that meets the fourteen learning outcomes for both Fine Arts 11 and Applied Skills 11.

When this new Graduation Program was announced with its inclusion of the Fine Arts 11 requirement, the Arts in Education Council of B.C. was gratified to see such a positive step forward. We strongly believe that some experience in the Fine Arts, even one course, helps toward the goal of ensuring that "all students receive a well rounded and complete education". The Council was interested in students' reactions to the new requirement. Many would have had to make shifts

(continued on page 2)

FINE ARTS 11 REQUIREMENT *(continued from page 1)*

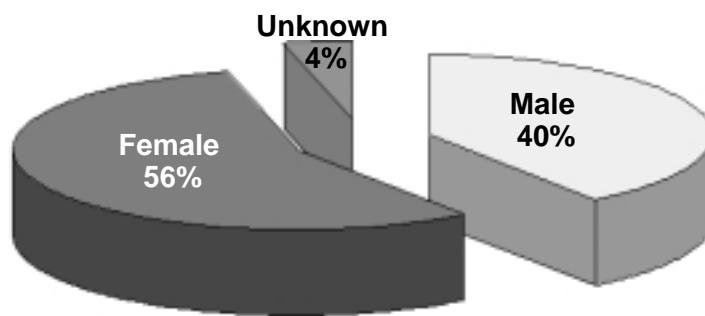
in their thinking and course planning to accommodate Fine Arts credits. The Council conducted a small survey in the summer of 1995 which showed some interesting finds. Many students who had not taken any of the Fine Arts previously were worried about their ability to do well enough to keep their graduating average up. Others were angry that they were required to take a subject away from their chosen study path. However, many others welcomed the initiative.

This first, informal survey was anecdotal in nature and did not lend itself to a large group study. The results, however, interested us and we decided to undertake a larger survey. This was developed and sent out with the Council's Newsletter. A number of student responses came in from interested teachers around the province, but these too proved somewhat anecdotal.

To do a third and more comprehensive survey we enlisted the help of the British Columbia Administrators of Art Education (BCAAE). A number of districts throughout B.C. undertook to distribute our new survey, and we were able to place it in those schools providing good quality arts instruction. The intent of the survey/questionnaire was to capture the change in students' attitudes towards the Fine Arts graduation requirement, early in its implementation. We wondered if, after taking a course in drama, music, visual art or dance, students would feel differently about being *required* to do so, and perhaps differently about the value of Fine arts in their education.

The surveys were completed from October 1996 to May 1998. Students from Grade 9 to 12 completed the questionnaire. Five districts took part, three getting the "third" survey and two receiving a "fourth" which was identical except for the inadvertent inclusion of an extra question (the extra question results are factored separately). The total sample was 1021 students.

SURVEY PARTICIPATION BY GENDER



These surveys were much better than the first two for getting concrete results, but they too had some

anecdotal responses which had to be transformed into a data format suitable for comparison. Categories were developed to encompass the many permutations of student answers. The data were entered on a spreadsheet and then each survey was checked for consistency of interpretation. The data were then ready to be sorted. Some of the students' anecdotal answers have been included in this report.

HIGHLIGHTS

QUESTION #1:

From which areas of the fine arts (music, drama, dance, visual arts) were you able to choose?

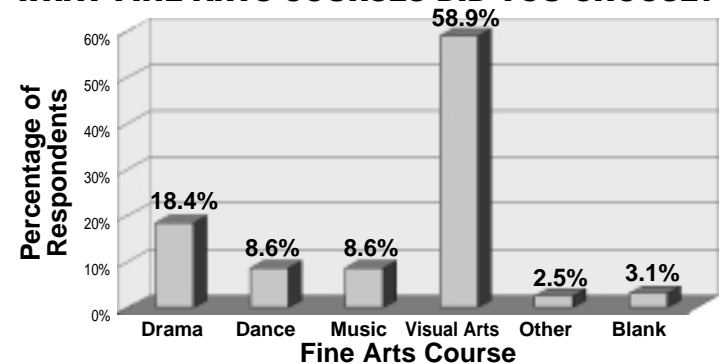
We hoped to gather information about the range of choice at individual schools. However, it appears that many students misunderstood the question and merely ticked the area from which they individually chose. Comments also indicated that students' answers were influenced by factors such as timetable restrictions. Thus, data received for Question #1 were not very informative; the question might have been better phrased.

QUESTION #2:

Name the Fine Arts course you chose.

These data were ultimately organized not by actual course name, but by discipline - visual art, drama, music or dance. Some findings:

WHAT FINE ARTS COURSES DID YOU CHOOSE?



The majority of students took courses offered in the visual arts fields. Possibly other fine arts courses were unavailable.

QUESTION #2a:

How did you feel about the Fine Arts requirement for graduation?

This question was included in the questionnaires given to only two of the five districts surveyed. 71.8% of the 454 students responded with positive feelings.

- 71.8% yes liked it
- 15.0% no, didn't like it
- 10.4% left blank
- 2.9% don't know

(continued on page 3)

FINE ARTS 11 REQUIREMENT *(continued from page 2)*

QUESTION #3:

Why did you choose this course?

We wanted to find out what guided students' choices. In tabulating the data, we created eight categories: "for credit, knowledge, love of subject, liked it better than others offered, fit in timetable, easy, continue from previously taken course, don't know why". Some students indicated more than one reason; these were also entered. Some findings: 74.6% chose a course because they loved the subject or wanted to learn more about it.

13.5%	credit
26.9%	knowledge
47.7%	like
5.9%	blank
2.4%	better than others
1.3%	timetable restrictions
1.2%	easy
.9%	don't know
.2%	continuing course

QUESTION #4:

Is there a Fine Arts course which was not offered that you would have preferred to take?

Some findings: some suggestions made by students included animation, photography, solo singing, ceramics, Chinese painting, dance, architecture, fashion design, modern art, computer graphics, cartooning, glass blowing, musical theatre, film, woodworking, script writing, chamber music and stage craft. 18% said "yes", there was something else they would like to take: 64.3% said "no", and 17.6% didn't answer.

QUESTION #5:

Is this your first Fine Arts course in high school?

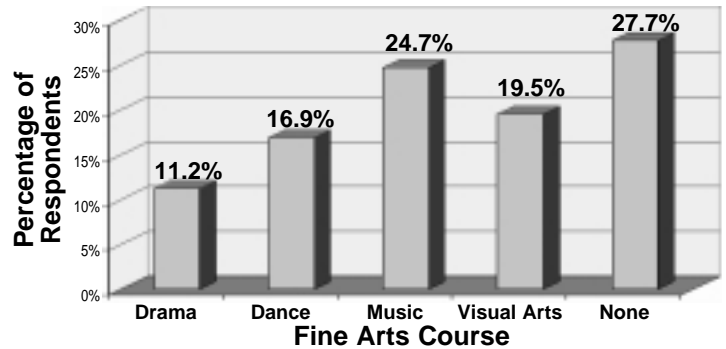
We wondered if, but for the graduation requirement, these students may not have been exposed to any Fine Arts at this level. Some findings: of those who said yes, it was their first Fine Arts course in high school (34.6% said yes, 64% said no, and 1.5% did not answer). 13.5% were taking an art course solely because of the requirement. Out of the 353 students taking Fine Arts for the first time, 126 (36%) indicated that they had taken no art outside of school either (see Question #6).

QUESTION #6:

Have you taken courses in any of the following areas (drama, music, dance, visual art) outside of school?

In tabulating the data we created a category for students who had no outside arts experience. It was interesting to see how these students felt about the fine arts in their answers to other questions. For example, 385 of the 1021 students surveyed had not taken any of the fine arts outside of school.

HAVE YOU TAKEN COURSES IN ANY OF THE FINE ARTS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL?



It is interesting to note, when compared to Question #2, that visual art ranked the highest of fine art course taken within school, while music ranked the highest of fine art courses taken outside school.

QUESTION #7:

Have your attitudes toward the value of the Fine Arts in your life been influenced because of the course you mentioned above?

547 out of the 1021 students answered "yes". Many students indicated that they already had a strong, positive attitude towards the arts and thus answered "no". Answers to Questions #3, #9 and #11 give us a better understanding of these students' true feelings. For example, 44% of these "no"s answered Questions #3 saying they took the course out of love for the subject. Of the 353 students taking Fine Arts for the first time, 191 said "yes" their attitudes had been influenced. In Question #9, 83.4% of the 547 said they would take more if it was credited for university entrance.

QUESTION #8:

Do you plan to take more Fine Arts in Grade 12?

Did taking a Grade 11 arts course pique the student's interest? Of the total sample of 1021, 575 or 56% said "yes", 208 said "no", 213 were already in Grade 12, and 25 didn't know. It is interesting to note that of the 353 "first timers" from Question #3, 60.3% would take a second course in the Fine Arts.

QUESTION #9:

Would you take more Fine arts courses if they were accepted as university entrance requirements?

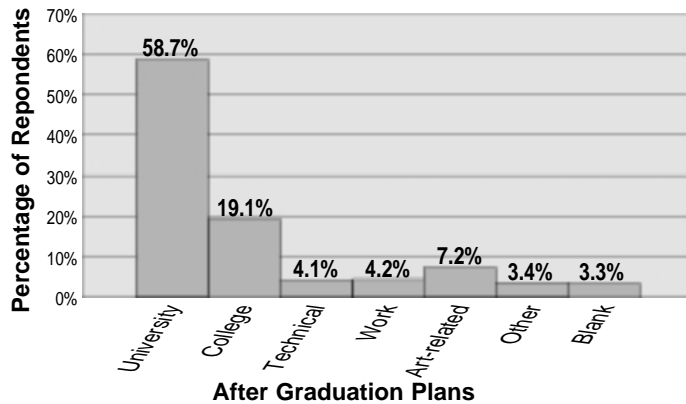
We were very interested in the response to this question. Obviously, those students continuing to university or college have small leeway in course selection in Grades 11 and 12. Of the whole sample, 75% said "yes", 21% "no", and 3.4% were blank. Of this 75% "yes"s, or 768 students, 59% said their attitudes to Fine Arts had been influenced by the required course (Question #7) and about 78% were planning to go to university or college (Question #10).

(continued on page 4)

FINE ARTS 11 REQUIREMENT *(continued from page 3)*

QUESTION #10:

After graduation what do you plan to do?



QUESTION #11:

As a result of taking this Fine Art course do you have a clearer understanding of the potential value of the Fine Arts?

As this was answered anecdotally we interpreted the responses into five categories - yes, no, question not understood, knew before, unanswered. Response was disappointing with 25.2% of all the students surveyed left this question blank with an additional 2.6% who indicated they did not understand the question. Of the 719 who understood the question, 535 answered "yes" and 184 answered "no".

Obviously, the above comments are but a taste of the vast amount of information that can be gleaned from these survey results. Each response can be read in the light of data from other questions, and so on. Generally, we were much heartened by the results. It seems evident that "required" exposure to a Fine Arts or Applied Arts course has made the students in our

small sample, at least, more aware of the virtues of the arts. Indeed the answers to Question 11 indicate a fairly sophisticated understanding of the value of the arts in school and in life. We'll print a selection of these interesting student comments in a future newsletter. Until then, here is a sample:

"... actually, when I first took drama, I chose it only because I needed a Fine Art to graduate, but later once I was in the course I got a different perspective of it. I was in the course where you act and basically make a fool of yourself because you have to pretend and do many weird stuff. But when I actually enrolled to the course myself, I learned many different things. I learned how different body languages mean something. I mean I can express my emotions, and read other peoples emotions without saying a word. But most important of all drama helped me to be more open and to not be scared to speak in front of people. Now I'm not afraid to give a speech in front of class and actually express myself. It actually helped me academically in English and courses such as Family Psyche where every week you have to make presentations. And believe me it helps a lot when you stand in front of a class with a positive attitude instead of wondering if you're gonna make a fool out of yourself. It's an excellent course, which I recommend to everybody, especially to people who were like me, afraid to stand in front of a number of bodies and talk."

The Council plans to make its findings and statistical spreadsheets available as a package in early 2000. A nominal fee will be charged to cover copying and mailing costs. Please contact Pat Hindmarch-Watson after January at 228-9589 by phone, 228-8443 by fax, or by email at phw@axionet.com.

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