



No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Facts

Congress is drafting a new version of the Elementary and Secondary Act, known as NCLB. It is our responsibility to inform our policy makers to make this legislation focus on the development of the whole child.

The arts are a core academic subject under the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB). The definition of core subjects in the law states that the term "core academic" subjects means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography. (located in Title IX, Part A, Section 9101 (1)(D)(11), "...arts programs are being diminished or eliminated because NCLB is being interpreted so narrowly as to be considered the reason for these actions...") Under NCLB, Title I, Part A funds also can be used by local education agencies to improve the educational achievement of disadvantaged students through the arts. In the same way, Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants can address the professional development needs of teachers of the arts, and portions of Title II funds can support partnerships that include nonprofit, cultural-arts organizations... Cultural partners in the community -- arts centers, symphonies, theatres, and the like -- can offer engaging venues as well as skilled instructors and mentors for students. "Source – Letter written by Rod Paige in July 2004 There have been unintended consequences of NCLB. Twenty-two percent of surveyed schools throughout the nation have decreased their arts programs since the implementation of NCLB.

WHY DO WE NEED ART EDUCATION?

The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution aids in developing critical and abstract thinking addresses different learning styles and needs teaches persistence and exploration creates reflective thinkers who are asked to step back, analyze and judge The arts teach children to be more tolerant and open. The arts allow children to express themselves creatively. The arts promote individuality, bolster self-confidence, and improve overall academic performance. The arts can help troubled youth, providing an alternative to delinquent behavior and truancy while providing and improved attitude towards school.

Young artists, as compared with their peers, are likely to: attend music, art, and dance classes nearly three times as frequently participate in youth groups nearly four times as regularly read for pleasure nearly twice as often perform community service more than four times as often Source: *Living the Arts through Language + Learning: A report on Community-based Youth Organizations*, Shirley Brice Heath, Stanford University and Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Americans for the Arts Monograph*, November 1998)

Businesses understand that arts education... builds a school climate of high expectation, discipline, and academic rigor that attracts businesses relocating to your community helps students develop a sense of craftsmanship, quality task performance, and goal-setting – skills needed to succeed in the classroom and beyond helps all students develop more appreciation and understanding of the world around them helps students develop a positive work ethic and pride in a job well done Source: *Business Circle for Arts Education in Oklahoma*, "Arts at the Core of Learning Initiative, 1999)

WHY DO WE NEED MUSIC EDUCATION?

On April 4, 2006, the U.S. House of Representatives (with the Senate concurring) unanimously passed House Concurrent Resolution 355. The bi-partisan resolution states that it is the sense of the Congress that music education grounded in rigorous instruction is an important component of a well-rounded academic curriculum and should be available to every student in every school. No Child Left Behind defines the arts as core subjects. NCLB has weaknesses that accelerate the decline in school music programs. The law also permits funds for teacher preparation to be unanimously passed Congressional Resolution 44445 which says music instruction "is an important component of a well-rounded academic curriculum and should be available to every student in every school."

THE LETTER Here are some things you might include:

Policy makers need to know that art education is working in Pennsylvania but we need their continued support to help strengthen our programs even more.

The National PTA and the Pennsylvania Art Education Association suggest asking policy makers to: Retain the arts in the definition of Core academic subjects Require annual state reports on student access to core academic subjects (collect data on the condition and status of arts education, ensuring equitable access to a comprehensive education for all students) Improve national data collection and research in arts education (the arts need to be included in studies done on education) Reauthorize the arts in education programs of the US Department of Education

State Representative/Senator - Sample Letter

(your address)

(date) The Honorable (full name)

(State capital address) Dear (Representative or Senator or Governor) _____, YOUR LETTER HERE - Make your letters personal – tell about your experiences in the arts and how this learning helped you in life. Describe experiences your children have had in the arts and how their lives would be changed if there were no arts courses available. Quote statistics that apply: Thank you for all that you do on behalf of our state. Sincerely,

(sign and print your name)