UNT Speaks Out on No Child Left Behind

THE IMPACT OF NCLB ON ARTS EDUCATION

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MAJOR REFERENCES

Sabol, F. Robert. *No Child Left Behind: A Study of Its Impact on Art Education*


Three Major Topics for Discussion

• Status of Art Education Prior to NCLB
• No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act
• NCLB and Art Education
STATUS OF ART EDUCATION PRIOR TO NCLB

What was the art education scene against which NCLB was introduced?

- Art Education experienced a major paradigm shift during the last quarter of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century
- National Standards for the Arts formulated by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations (1994)
- Goals 2000: Educate America Act enacted into law; included the arts as a core subject (1994)
- Access to instruction
- Assessment
PARADIGM SHIFT

• Move to implement a comprehensive approach to teaching art
  – art history
  – art criticism
  – aesthetics
  – art production

• Move away from studio-based instruction

• Emphasis on curriculum integration
STANDARDS

- Standards have symbolic importance in the culture of schooling

- In the arts, standards express a social-cultural commitment to at least two principles
  - The arts are worthy human achievements
  - The arts are sustained across generations when studies in them are widely available (Chapman)

- 2003-2004: 48 states had content standards in the arts, but only 20 states had mandated some form of arts education (Arts Education Partnership [AEP] database)
GOALS 2000: EDUCATE AMERICA ACT

• Goals 2000: Educate America Act included the arts as a core subject

• Goal 3 specifically states: All students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, the arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our nation's modern economy.
87% of elementary schools and 93% of secondary schools offered some form of instruction in the visual arts

Full-time certified art specialist teachers were available in 55% of elementary schools

At least 1 full-time art teacher was present in 88% of secondary schools

49% of elementary schools offered instruction in a dedicated art room with special equipment
ACCESS TO INSTRUCTION

• 81% of secondary schools had such facilities

• 65% of elementary schools & 69% of secondary schools sponsored field trips to art museums or galleries

• After school programs in the arts were available in 51% of elementary schools and 73% of secondary schools
• 2003: only 12 states had mandated statewide assessment programs in the arts (AEP database)

• 6 states required local arts assessments of some kind if the arts were taught

• National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB) ACT

• Legislative Background

• Major Characteristics

• Key Terms
LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

• Signed into law January 8, 2002

• Reauthorized the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act

• Modified the 1994 reauthorization known as Improving America’s Schools Act
MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS

• Multi-grade testing requirements in reading, mathematics, and science extending to the year 2014

• In exchange for federal funds, NCLB requires states and districts to generate a series of 40 accountability measures that apply to all public schools in a state, even if particular districts and schools do not receive those funds
KEY TERMS: BEST PRACTICES

• Aligned with national and state standards for achievement

• “Scientifically proven” to be least costly and with best outcomes

• Able to be applied, duplicated and scaled-up for wide use
KEY TERMS: STANDARDS

• Each state is required to have the same standards for students in public schools.

• Standards must identify what students should know and be able to do at four levels: below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced.

• States must identify, develop, and disseminate high quality, effective curricula aligned to national and state standards.
KEY TERMS: ASSESSMENTS

• All public schools are required to administer statewide tests; 95% of students in each school must take them

• Tests must be rigorous, demanding, academic, secular, neutral and non-ideological

• Only 1% of students with the most severe cognitive limitations are exempt
KEY TERMS: ASSESSMENTS

• Students with limited proficiency in English are expected to pass statewide tests presented in English within 3 years after beginning studies of English

• States must agree to participate in National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading and mathematics at grades 4 & 8

• Tests must include an itemized score analysis so that teaching can focus on “the needs indicated by the items”
**KEY TERMS:**

**ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP)**

- A measurable target for improved test scores in reading, mathematics and science
- Rewards to schools that meet or exceed the target
- Penalties for those that do not
- Scores must be tracked to race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, attendance, mobility, status in special education, limited English proficiency, qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals, and more; in combination these categories require 120 levels of analysis, creating a statistical quagmire for deciding on best practices
KEY TERMS: REPORT CARDS

• Based on test scores for each student

• Also used to measure the effectiveness of teachers

• Scores must be summarized for each subject, teacher, grade level or course, class, and subgroup of students

• Reports flow upward to the district and state level, then to USDE

• Standard & Poor’s School Evaluation Service is compiling an online database for all public schools, including reports on AYP and a “return on resources” index; the index reflects how well each school performs in relation to district spending
In Summary

“NCLB is the most fully developed case of federal micromanaging of schools in American history”

Chapman
NCLB and Art Education

Art Educators are caught in a “Catch-22” environment of policy-making

• On the one hand,
  – standards-based reforms offer some promise of raising awareness of the arts as a worthy domain for study
  – Additionally, there may be benefits from greater oversight of arts education in relation to access to instruction and the quality of teaching and learning

• These hopes are expressed in the formation of national standards
NCLB and Art Education

Art Educators are caught in a “Catch-22” environment of policy-making.

• On the other hand,
  – the requirements of NCLB do not support education in the arts, or foreign language, or the humanities and social studies, creating what is now called “the lost curriculum,” because the federal agenda determines, in large measure, how states, districts, and schools invest their resources.
SABOL STUDY

The Impact of NCLB on Art Education Programs

• Attempted to discover what, if any, impact NCLB has had on art education programming and art teachers’ practices

• Focused on determining the impact on the following areas:
  – Staffing
  – Teaching loads
  – Enrollments
  – Funding
  – Scheduling
  – Curriculum
  – Teaching and instruction
  – Assessment
SABOL STUDY: NATIONAL SAMPLE 3,412 TEACHERS

• Level of teaching
  – 34% elementary
  – 22% middle
  – 32% secondary
  – 7% supervision and administration
  – 2% museum educators

• Experience
  – 16.4 years of teaching on average
  – 76% of respondents held graduate degrees

• Geographic Distribution
  - 35% suburban
  - 25% urban
  - 21% rural
  - 19% town settings
SABOL STUDY: MAJOR FINDINGS

- Staffing, teaching loads, and enrollments have experienced limited negative consequences because of NCLB.

- NCLB has created a number of negative affects on scheduling, increased workload, and funding.

- Art educators generally have negative attitudes about the overall impact NCLB has had on art education programming.
SABOL STUDY: MAJOR FINDINGS

• Some positive aspects from NCLB
  – Art educators are more reflective about their programs and their teaching
  – Art educators have come to the understanding that adjustments to accepted practices and expectations have enabled them to make improvements in their programs and instruction
  – Art educators spend more time revising curriculum and instructional practices
  – Art educators have increased their emphasis on assessment of learning in art
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