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Review of Research and Emerging Trends in Arts Education



June 2016

learning | **as unique** | as every student



**Calgary Board
of Education**

Fine Arts Advisory Council (FAAC) 2016

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Education signifies an initiation into new ways of seeing, hearing, feeling, moving. It signifies the nurture of a special kind of reflectiveness and expressiveness, a reaching out for meanings, a learning to learn.

Maxine Green

A. Purpose

This paper is a revision of ***Starting a Conversation for a Blueprint for the Future of Fine and Performing Art Education*** submitted to the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) Superintendent's Team June, 2013. In June 2015, The Fine Arts Advisory Council (FAAC) was charged with continuing "to pursue local, national and global research that will inform arts education, curriculum development and support success for each student." The amount of research emerging in the past three years warranted a revision of the original document.

The audience for this paper is primarily CBE staff with the purpose of developing a common understanding of the current research and trends in Arts Education with a particular focus on local research which will support evidence-based decision-making. It is not intended to be an extensive literature review, but rather highlights of research and trends in Arts Education that are relevant to our context.

The CBE has taken a significant leadership role in its relentless commitment to personalized learning, which focuses on success for each student through high quality instructional design of inclusive, meaningful and engaging tasks for students. Intellectual engagement and student agency ensure students know themselves as learners and are co-designers of their own learning. This paper supports this vision in addition to that of Alberta Education as reflected in the 2013 Ministerial Order which outlines the goal of enabling all students to become "Engaged Thinkers and Ethical citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit."

B. Context

The repositioning of fine and performing arts education is situated within and informed by global, national, provincial and local perspectives, parameters and worldwide educational reform. The global movement towards personalization and interdisciplinary, authentic project-based learning has now placed art education in the mainstream.

There is a world-wide resurgence in the revaluing of the arts both in creating culturally vibrant, healthy cities to enhance quality of life and as a foundational component of educating and engaging our youth to respond to the complexities of our world today and in the future. There is a recognition that "Art creates, enhances, and defines culture." (Jensen, 2001) Not only are the arts of great value in themselves, there is wide-spread support for strengthening art education to develop well-rounded, creative, innovative and compassionate citizens who can problem-solve, collaborate, network and contribute to society, both socially and economically. There is a sense of urgency across many spheres, including and perhaps especially the business community, for education reform that embeds the arts, creativity, innovation and design as key components.

In *The Element*, Sir Ken Robinson states, "businesses everywhere say they need people who are creative and can think independently. But the argument is not just whatever work we do." For our students to develop their full potential, they need to discover their *element*--"the place where the things you love to do and things you are good at come together." (Robinson, 2009)



“Art is about asking questions, which is a good way of looking at how to solve a problem. I like to apply how artists think to look at how to improve design, technology...and now leadership.

(Maeda)

It’s simple logic, Pasi Sahlberg writes in the European Journal; “There is no creativity without trust that allows people to try new ways of thinking and working, in other words, taking risks. Furthermore, there is no innovation without an environment in which people can come up with original ideas that have value, in other words, where they can be creative.” (Sahlberg, 2010)

Dr. John Maeda, former President of the Rhode Island School of Design is a champion of the STEM to STEAM movement. The website [STEM-to-STEAM](#) explains, "In this climate of economic uncertainty, America is once again turning to innovation as the way to ensure a prosperous future. Yet innovation remains tightly coupled with Science, Technology, Engineering and Math-the STEM subjects. Art + Design are poised to transform our economy in the 21st century. We need to add Art + Design to the equation-to transform STEM to STEAM". At the 2013 Arts Advocacy Day, art’s advocate Matt Sorum suggests instead the acronym should be A STEM because “the arts make STEM grow.”

The City of Calgary is well-positioned to embrace the STEM-STEAM movement as the large majority of Alberta’s engineers reside in Calgary. STEAM Alberta has now become STEAM 360.

Calgary launched its first Beakerhead Movement, September 11-15, 2013. Beakerhead merges art, engineering and science and "brings together two crucial sectors in our community—engineering and culture—which share creativity, innovation and the Calgary Spirit." (Mayor Naheed Nenshi) Founded by Mary Anne Moser from Cybera, a not-for profit Alberta organization building e-infrastructure and Jay Ingram of the Discovery Channel, Beakerhead is joined by cornerstone organizations including the Glenbow Museum, Mount Royal University, SAIT Polytechnic, University of Calgary, Telus Spark and collaborators that are comprised of arts, innovation and culture organizations.

Cities across the world are engaging in consultation processes with their communities to develop plans to revitalize and/or improve the quality of life of citizens. Interestingly, school districts have also engaged in what are clearly parallel processes.

The City of Calgary has engaged in such a consultation processes with the citizens of Calgary. In March 2014, ***Living a Creative Life: An Arts Development Strategy for Calgary*** was released. The strategy emerged from nearly two years of rigorous consultation and is a result of Calgary’s year as a Cultural Capital of Canada. After many hours of discussion with more than 1,000 Calgarians, a shared vision and five major focus areas emerged. Each of these focus areas is supported by detailed outcomes, drivers, tactics, and indicators by which success and progress are tracked and measured. The focus areas are:

- Creative Communities
- Centre City Arts District
- Arts Incubation
- Artistic Exchange
- Youth and Education

In the strategy's first year, more than 100 signatories joined the movement. Signatories are groups or organizations that contribute to one or more tactics outlined in the strategy, and agree to consider the overall framework in their own strategic planning. Signatories also participate in shared measurement activities so that the progress of the strategy's goals can be tracked. The Calgary Board of Education became a signatory in 2014.

CADA collaborated with Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi to launch the Mayor's Lunch for Arts Champions on February 21, 2013. This celebration of the Arts recognized Calgary as the Cultural Capital of Canada and was the kick-off to a two day Arts Champion's Congress. Delegates comprised of artists, educators, representatives from arts organizations, City of Calgary and corporate Calgary who participated in a variety of sessions including an Arts Summit, Building Places for Creativity, Community, collaboration and Change, Building Corporate and Community Investment Partnerships, Creativity and Innovation in Corporate Culture and a session co-hosted by CADA and the CBE entitled *Excellence in Arts Education*. CBE teachers and administrators as well as representatives from post-secondary institutions and members of the FAAC joined other delegates in a three hour Mini Summit, a collaborative process to provide input to CADA and to inform the future of arts education in the CBE.

The wealth of nations and the well-being of individuals depend on having artists. In a world enriched by abundance but disrupted by the automation and outsourcing of white-collar work, everyone, regardless of profession, must cultivate an artistic sensibility.
(Pink, 2005)

Calgary's VitalSigns is an annual report on the vitality of Calgary sponsored by the Calgary Foundation. In the most recent report in 2016:

- 87 per cent of those surveyed believed the arts help bring people together and enable people to connect with each other.
- 82 per cent of respondents believe that a strong arts and culture scene is key to creating a vibrant, safe and prosperous city.
- 87 per cent reported that they engaged in arts
- 17 per cent volunteer for an arts organization or an arts event.
- 3,405 arts activities were produced in 2014 for audiences from disability, LBGTQ, multicultural and aboriginal communities.

The City of Calgary is in the midst of creating the **City of Calgary Cultural Plan** after an extensive public engagement process. According to the City of Calgary website, "This plan will allow Calgarians to understand what we already have in the way of cultural resources, help identify the gaps and plan for what we need to do in the future. The Cultural Plan will allow us to demonstrate what a culturally rich city Calgary is, which strengthens our economy and improves the quality of life for all Calgarians."

The City of Toronto published its Action Plan entitled [Creative Capital Gains in 2011](#) which focuses on both the economic benefits of cultural and creative capital and the social benefits for youth, communities and all citizens. It states that "many performing arts organizations are trying to fill the gap that schools have left in arts programming" but makes no recommendation for the Boards of Education or for collaboration.

Making the Case for Culture, a 2005 publication by the Creative City Network of Canada provides an extensive literature review of the benefits of arts and culture for the personal and social development of children and youth. The key arguments include:

- The arts are an effective outreach tool to engage youth.
- Learning in and through the arts enhances learning in other domains and general scholastic achievement.
- The arts build resilience and self-esteem in young people.
- The arts contribute to creating healthy and supportive communities for youth.
- The arts help in the successful transition to adulthood and the development of in-demand job skills.
- The arts offer opportunities for youth leadership development and for youth to affect positive change in their communities.

United States President Barack Obama commissioned the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities (PCAH) which released its report [*Re-investing in Arts Education: Winning America's Future through Creative Schools*](#), in 2011.

Its extensive review of research including longitudinal studies, brain research and arts integration studies, demonstrated significant positive improvement in academic achievement and creativity through arts education. They propose, "a seamless marriage of arts education strategies with overall educational goals, a vibrant collaboration between arts specialist, classroom teachers and teaching artists to create collaborative, creative environments that allow each child to reach his or her potential, using all the tools at our disposal to reach and engage them in learning." The Committee made the following recommendations:

- Build robust collaborations among different approaches to arts education.
- Develop the field of arts integration.
- Expand in-school opportunities for teaching artists.
- Utilize federal and state policies to reinforce the place of arts in K-12 education.
- Widen the focus of evidence gathering about arts education.



The report boldly summarizes, "The value of arts education is often phrased in enrichment terms-helping kids find their voice, rounding out their education and tapping into their undiscovered talents. This is true, but as President's Committee saw in schools all over the country, it is also an effective tool in school-wide reform and fixing some of our biggest challenges. It is not a flower, but a wrench."

On December 10 2015, US President Barack Obama signed the ***Every Student Succeeds Act*** which replaced ***No Child Left Behind***. The focus is on a "well-rounded" education which includes arts education.

There is a commitment to a well-rounded Education in Finland where students start formal schooling at the age of 7 and one-third of their school day is devoted to art, music and physical education.

The best way to predict the future is to design it.
(Buckminster Fuller)

Australia's Victoria Department of Education has come to know that interaction through the Arts builds understanding and appreciation of their Indigenous cultures. Educational curricular standards are characterized by three interconnected strands of learning, each of which are made up of a number of domains: physical, personal and social learning that addresses health and physical education, interpersonal development, personal learning, government and citizenship. Discipline-based learning includes the arts as a core discipline and it is placed first before English and languages other than English, the humanities (economics, geography and History), mathematics and science. Interdisciplinary Learning is the last domain, which includes communication, design, creativity and technology, information and communications technology and thinking. The document goes beyond the obvious relationship with discipline-based learning in the arts and other disciplines, many school/arts partnerships have the potential to introduce new and creative ways of thinking and learning which can have a positive impact across all disciplines as well as the interdisciplinary learning standard. (Partnerships between schools and the professional arts sector Victoria, Australia Paper no. 19 June 2009)

In Canada, C21 Canada: Canadians for 21st Century Learning and Innovation published [*Shifting Minds: A 21st Century Vision of Public Education for Canada*](#) in 2012. Focussing on a "made in Canada" vision, this call for action examines global research, policies, and trends and concludes, "Multi-literate, creative and innovative people are now seen as the drivers of the 21st Century and the prerequisites to economic success, social progress and personal empowerment." C21 has identified the following seven 21st Century Competencies:

- Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Critical Thinking
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Character
- Culture and Ethical Citizenship
- Computer and Digital Technologies

In 2015, C21 published ***Shifting Minds 3.0: Redefining the Learning Landscape in Canada***. The paper contends that "the well-tested methods of making change in education through incremental improvement are insufficient to the task of transforming schools into 21st century learning environments. We see the possibilities in many individual schools and classrooms-where personalization of the curriculum is the natural outgrowth of students' interest and aptitudes; where students communicate with subject experts worldwide; where classroom discipline and culture are established by students because their work is interesting and valued by themselves and those they connect to."

This paper argues that sustaining innovation over time is a huge challenge. It proposes that we need to "scale out" innovations which means "spreading a promising innovation to other schools" and "scale up" which means "changing the whole system-for example, by altering the way resources are allocated or by changing policies or procedures to sustain innovations."

Alberta Education engaged in a K-12 Arts Education Consultation process 2008 and published its **Draft K-12 Arts Education Consultation** report in 2009 to inform the development of a new Programs of Study. The report describes the current status of fine arts programs in schools and identifies the role of art education in 21st century learning. Key themes identified include globalization, information and technology and the complex learner. The report identifies that Arts Education plays an integral role as "The arts are tools of cultural expression and can transcend the barriers of language. Arts Education helps students understand their local and global community." In addition, "the arts develop critical and creative thinking that is needed for students to thrive in changing contexts. Student need to be able to look at massive amounts of information and think critically to analyze what is relevant and what is important." The arts "develop problem-solving skills, critical and creative thinking. The arts also provide opportunities for students to lead and help others." New curriculum "hopes" to maintain the integrity of the arts disciplines, develop a provincial dance program, resource and assessment support and "generalist friendly" programs of study.



The arts allow me to express myself in ways that words cannot.
(Calgary Student)

The existing Fine Arts Programs of Study were released between 1984 and 1994. There are programs of study for art, drama and music Grades 1-12. Music and art are mandatory for Grades 1-6. Currently dance, media and literary arts are locally developed courses.

As part of the process of reviewing and revising the fine arts program of studies, Alberta Education held focus groups that included First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) peoples within the province. The results were published in a 2009 draft report entitled, **K-12 Arts Education: First Nations, Metis and Inuit Focus Groups---Themes and Findings in Arts Education**. One of the most powerful paragraphs that summarize the findings is:

"Art is the heartbeat of our people. It is not something that's outside of us". This statement of a First Nations teacher clearly illustrates how FNMI people feel about the arts. Participants voiced that, for many FNMI students, it is the arts that keep them in school."

The recurring themes are:

- Arts education helps students discover their identity and culture
- Arts education makes healing and well-being possible
- Arts education provides a positive outlet for expression

In its 2010 Report [*Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans*](#), Alberta Education identifies ten competencies that educated Albertans should be able to demonstrate:

- Know how to learn—to gain knowledge, understanding or skills through experience, study, and interaction with others.
- Think critically—conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate to construct knowledge.
- Identify and solve complex problems.
- Manage information---access, interpret, evaluate and use information effectively, efficiently, and ethically.
- Innovate---create and generate new ideas or concepts.
- Create opportunities---through play, imagination, reflection, negotiation, and competition---with an entrepreneurial spirit.

I have learned how to slow down my thinking and thus, can understand more.
(Calgary Student)

- Apply multiple literacies---reading, writing, mathematics, technology, languages, media, and personal finance.
- Demonstrate good communication skills and the ability to work cooperatively with others.
- Demonstrate global and cultural understanding.
- Identify and apply career and life skills.

Alberta Education soon followed with the [*Framework for Student Learning: Competencies for Engaged Thinkers and Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit*](#) in 2011 to "provide direction for the development of future curriculum (programs of study, assessment, and learning and teaching resources)" following a review of educational literature and research and an extensive consultation process. The competencies of Critical Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making, Creativity and Innovation, Social, Cultural, Global and Environmental Responsibility, Communication, Digital and Technological Fluency, Lifelong Learning, Personal Management and Well-being, Collaboration and Leadership are identified as key in achieving Alberta Education's vision that "All students are inspired to achieve success and fulfilment as engaged thinkers and ethical citizen with an entrepreneurial spirit."

Art is nourishment for my soul-indeed, art is vital nourishment for all of our souls. Through the arts I have become a better human being and a more reflective thinker.
(Rocky Mountain House Student)

It is evident that the development of creativity and the creative process is integral to education at all levels internationally, nationally and provincially. Charles Leadbeater (2008) describes the new generation as being defined by what they share in the way of ideas and creative practice, not by what they own, as creativity is emerging as an essential practice for today's complexities.

The Calgary Board of Education responded to the challenge by Alberta Education to assume the leadership in Curriculum Development Prototyping in collaboration with 16 other school jurisdictions. In January 2015, **Arts Education** was submitted to Alberta Education. This Arts Education Curriculum Prototype begins with the premise that the Arts are core. The general construct for Arts Education takes a holistic view of the child within a holistic view of the arts. The "big why" is living a creative life. This is achieved through encounters with art, encounters with art-making and encounters with artists. The disciplinary ways of knowing and being include:

- Aesthetic awareness
- Artistic disposition
- Developing one's craft
- Understanding self, others and the world
- Self-Expression

This document was approved by CBE. Although we can't yet fully implement, participating jurisdictions have incorporated the foundational principles to create innovative initiatives.

Calgary Board of Education has been a leader in Arts Education. Art-Centred Learning was the first alternative program created in the Calgary Board of Education after French Immersion. Launched in 1997 Art-Centred Learning has expanded from one site to four sites serving students from Grades 5 through 12. The integrity framework for arts-centered learning identifies the key outcomes for students to be:

- enhanced academic success through engagement in and through the arts
- a deep understanding of self

- a sense of belonging in an active community within and beyond the school;
- competencies in creativity and innovation; critical thinking, problem solving and decision making; communication; life-long learning and personal management; collaborative leadership; social, cultural and global responsibility
- an understanding of the lived experience of artists
- enhanced appreciation of the arts as an integral component of culture and community
- respect and the ability to embrace diversity

The capability to be creative, for people to be able to shape their own lives, their communities and to make a difference to their world, is what we need education and learning to develop on a mass scale.

(Charles Leadbeater)

The Performing and Visual Arts program was established at Central Memorial High School and serves students across Calgary. Students audition for this program in their chosen discipline and have an opportunity to receive specialized and intense art education.

The outcomes of Art-Centred Learning are now not alternative, but mainstream. Many schools of all grade configurations are exploring ways of enhancing the arts learning opportunities for their students. The question is no longer “Do we integrate the arts?” The question is “How”?

The Arts Leading the Way to Student Success is a 2020 Action Agenda for Advancing the Arts in Education by the Arts Education Partnership, a US network of organizations dedicated to advancing the arts in education through research, policy, and practice. They refer to Arts Education as both arts as core academic subjects and as integrated in other disciplines.

"A student who meets the rigorous standards of artistic literacy has acquired the knowledge and understanding needed to participate authentically in the arts and the ability to transfer that knowledge and understanding to making connections to other subjects and setting"

The Action Agenda identifies four priority areas:

1. Raise student achievement and success
2. Support effective educators and school leaders
3. Transform the teaching and learning Environment.
4. Build leadership capacity and knowledge

Dr. Brittany Harker Martin, Director of the Werklund Youth Leadership Centre at University of Calgary, authored an Arts Education policy review entitled, ***Teaching the Arts as a Second Language: A School-Wide Policy Approach to Arts Integration*** in 2016. She calls for "pedagogical reform that enables equitable access for all students to learn in, about, and through the arts with school-wide policy that scaffolds artistic learning across the grades, embedded in meaningful contexts." When the paper was written, Saskatchewan was the only province that had an arts education curriculum with mandated minutes in art, drama, dance and music weekly from K-9. Dr. Harker Martin argues that in the absence of the mandatory program of studies, students are exposed to entry-level lessons when integrating the arts, thus limiting their artistic growth.

Promising partnerships continue to emerge. Many of these initiatives have a research component which is providing us with relevant local data.

Alberta College of Art and Design (ACAD) has opened their doors to CBE teachers and students and has made concerted efforts to share facilities and faculty. With the college's new mission to engage the community they have intentionally followed through by planning with CBE schools around art education. They have invited schools onto the campus to participate in various artistic processes and studio spaces unavailable in CBE. ACAD has supported CBE schools by sharing their expertise and providing professional development. CBE and ACAD have shared student work and exhibits that exemplify the rigour and passion of the arts that exist in both our education systems.

CBE offers ACAD Alumni studio space in CBE schools to practice their craft and to offer alumni experience in the community and a chance to work in education for a one year period. ACAD has awarded alumni substantial fellowships to support this practice. This innovative program has positively impacted student outcomes as studio artists immerse themselves into the school culture and engage in authentic generative tasks. Studio artists have become an integral part of the school community attending staff and planning meetings, offering professional development and including students in various art processes and conversations. By engaging with artists and contemporary art students, teachers and administration are provoked to think differently.

Dr. Brittany Harker Martin is also leading a research project designed to analyze the impact of a program for teacher professional learning delivered by Learning Through the Arts (LTTA) , with intended learning outcomes to develop teacher *artistry of instructional design* by: increasing understanding of and experience with the arts (through working with Professional artists); increasing understanding of and experience with design thinking/planning; and increasing aesthetic awareness (skills of noticing deeply, questioning, and embodying media arts). Through this increased *artistry of instructional design*, it is proposed that consequentially, classroom teachers will experience increased *teacher efficacy*. This research is being conducted in 14 CBE middle, elementary and high schools. This LTTA initiative is in its second of four years.

The Research by Dr. Brittany Harker Martin of University of Calgary titled ***Kids Go Global and Socially Empowered Learning*** conducted in Calgary middle schools found that the highest increase in intellectual engagement, Social empowerment and Entrepreneurial Spirit came from a combined program that employed social enterprise and arts integration. An interesting finding was that English Language Learners had higher scores on intellectual engagement than those with English as a first language.

Legacy Children's Foundation which involves 70 at-risk CBE students in free music lessons is researching student engagement over time as a result of their intervention.

C. Emerging Themes in Art Education

The following themes have emerged world-wide, nationally, provincially and locally. The research, policy and practices across the world as well as the input from our local research and stakeholders are remarkably consistent and provide us with clear direction in moving forward.

1. Curriculum Development/Pedagogy

The arts are integral to a rich meaningful, personalized, inclusive and rigorous education. "Art as a core subject" is a dominant theme. In all grades, learning in

With pencil in hand, I can create whatever I want without discrimination. Art is a way for me to express my inner thoughts. With the freedom I get from drawing, life doesn't seem so bad. Art has helped me though the rough times in my life.
(Calgary Student)

the arts should provide both traditional and contemporary opportunities along with new media/multi-disciplinary forms and genres. Congruent with the CBE [Three-Year Education Plan](#), both stakeholders and research support a vision that extends beyond excellence in the arts, to a focus on excellent education for all that fosters independent and creative thinkers, designers, problem-solvers, innovators, knowledge generators, risk-takers, life-long learners, and citizens that contribute to their communities and create a better world.

To meet these escalating changes, an inclusive art education curriculum includes the following practices:

- Students are actively engaged and inspired by tasks that challenge, intentionally focus on multiple literacies and are inter-disciplinary.
- Art education becomes both discreet and integrated across all disciplines. Students learn of, about and through the arts. Multifaceted and process oriented, arts curriculum should provide different perspectives, clear frameworks and assessment processes.
- The learning environment extends beyond the school building, and seamlessly incorporates the community and off-campus experiences.
- Strengthened opportunities for future partnerships by coordinating efforts and collaborating with experts, art organizations and partners to create educational goals for arts programming that are shared across the community. Opportunities may include:
 - sharing facilities
 - field trips
 - funding arts curriculum
 - artists-in-schools
 - sharing resources
 - sharing funding responsibilities
 - student apprenticeships/internships
 - mentor teachers
 - resources and art organizations accessible to teachers
- Although important to maintain the integrity of the disciplines, Programs of Study need to be repositioned in today's context and incorporate contemporary art, which is designed to challenge and provoke our thinking. Contemporary art invites us to experience different perspectives and think in new ways; it encourages us to consider unique associations that lead us to imagine new realities. In Contemporary Art, political literacy figures prominently as an expression of social justice in today's society.
- All elementary students should have quality instruction in the arts. Dance should be added as a program of study. In addition to specialized courses in Grades 7-12, students need to have the opportunity to take exploratory art courses.
- Introduction of mandatory credits in art education at the secondary level.
- Seamless transitions to post-secondary institutions to explore expanded opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships and accreditation. The CBE is currently modelling this strategy with the Alberta College of Art and Design.



- A priority for equity of art opportunities for students. The resourcing for art education should reflect this priority. The importance of art education should be clearly articulated by Alberta Education and the Calgary Board of Education.
- Working with practicing artists is imperative for students, whether it be on or off-site. Opportunities for students to have on-going interaction with artists as the student and the artist engage in the artistic process are deemed most valuable. The need for a fluid and seamless process to allow easy access for schools to artists and artists to schools is imperative for student learning in the arts.
- Communication within, among and with external agencies needs to be fluid, flexible and easily accessed.

2. Staffing

Every school needs passionate highly qualified art educators.

The CBE's goal is to ensure that every school has highly qualified teachers in all areas of fine arts to ensure that all students receive quality fine arts instruction. Innovative staffing models that allow students the opportunity to receive specialized instruction in the arts are being explored. Sharing of specialists and practicing artists across schools is encouraged. While recognizing the importance of teacher student relationships, CBE could consider the possibility of K-12 families of schools to ensure a quality art education. Mentorship opportunities for both staff and students with artists need to be expanded.

3. Professional Learning

Teachers benefit from expert in-depth instruction to improve practice. Building the collective capacity of teachers in art education may include:

- job embedded professional learning with specialists and/or practicing arts working together with generalists
- professional learning communities
- curriculum design
- performance based assessment
- understanding arts concepts and creative processes
- skills and techniques
- art integration
- child development in the arts



In many jurisdictions schools are employing “teaching artists” who are arts specialists. These teaching artists work with teachers to design tasks and personalize student learning. This may happen on a regular or intermittent basis.

Principals need to be supported as the instruction leaders in their school as they build capacity, creativity and design. Communication processes that enable teachers to easily access professional learning opportunities in art education, creativity and design is imperative.

The understanding of the importance of art as an integral part of education has direct implications for post-secondary institutions as they design education for teacher training. The CBE would like to work in partnerships with post-secondary institutions to ensure teachers are prepared for the significant shift in education suggested in this paper.

I often find ways to solve problems through my creativity.
(Calgary Student)

4. Accessing Artists

An easily accessible artist roster would greatly improve accessing artists and expand the repertoire of artists that work in schools. Sharing school spaces with practicing studio artists has the potential to provide authentic learning and support in schools. Designating key contact people in each school greatly enhances communication and ultimately the quality of the experience for students, teachers and artists.

5. Fine Arts Integration

While there is strong recognition that the arts are important disciplines unto themselves, there is clear consensus that the arts and other disciplines do not live in silos. Educators should not solely focus on integrating arts into other disciplines, but also on integrating other disciplines into the arts. Lynne Silverstein and Sean Layne from the Kennedy Arts centre define arts integration as “an approach to teaching in which students construct a demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject are and meets **evolving objectives in both.**

6. Collaboration/Community

Research indicates that no one organization or sector can continue to work in isolation in the context of 21st century learning. There are unlimited opportunities for students and for Calgary itself through on-going collaboration of the CBE, the arts community, post-secondary institutions, business and the general public. It will be imperative to educate the public on the importance of art education.

7. Facilities/Space

A need for more dedicated spaces for both art education and performances was identified by stakeholders. There is considerable space within schools and community centres that go unused after hours that could be made available to artists. Expanding the use of community and public spaces by CBE would provide more opportunities and access for students. This would also add equity for students who are not able to travel long distances for art opportunities.

8. Resources

On-going sustainable funding is required to support art education. A significant challenge to excellent art education in schools is the school-based allocation of resources, particularly staff. There is competition for a limited amount of resources. Strong systemic and school-based leadership and support for the arts is necessary to "raise the bar" as a system. Working with our partners, there is a need to continue to develop new funding sources.

D. Conclusion

The global, national, provincial and local movement towards personalization, interdisciplinary and authentic project-based learning now places art education in the mainstream.

This paper suggests the Calgary Board of Education has an opportunity to continue to take a leadership role in providing input and direction to system and provincial policies, curriculum development, assessment practices, support systems and funding to allow flexibility and choice to be known and practiced in arts education. The Calgary Board of Education is also intentional about building strategic alliances and collaborations with Calgary post-secondary institutions, the arts community, and corporate partnerships.

Research indicates that the Calgary Board of Education would benefit from a clear vision of art education. Communicating the value of learning in, through and about the arts will substantiate the need for building professional capital and stewarding resources in the arts. The arts provide students with opportunities to personalize learning and to become active citizens capable of creating new ideas in their schools and in their communities.

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