

Briefing Paper

**Children and Youth, the Arts, and Public Policy:
Present Urgencies for Higher Education**

**August 1998
Reprinted May 2009**

COUNCIL OF ARTS ACCREDITING ASSOCIATIONS

National Association of Schools of Art and Design

National Association of Schools of Dance

National Association of Schools of Music

National Association of Schools of Theatre

General Notes

The Council of Arts Accrediting Associations is a joint, *ad hoc* effort of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, the National Association of Schools of Dance, the National Association of Schools of Music, and the National Association of Schools of Theatre. The Council works with matters of general concern to the arts community in higher education, with particular focus on the issues and policies affecting instructional quality and accreditation.

From time to time, the Council issues analytical documents, each of which covers a specific issue. The objective is to distill major themes, trends, and prospects into a form that encourages and empowers individual and institutional reflection, analysis, and action. The Council particularly encourages the sharing of its analytical documents with faculty and other administrators at the institution.

Readers are encouraged to share ideas about subjects or contents for future analytical documents by contacting CAAA at the National Office for Arts Accreditation, whose address appears below.

Disclaimer

This text is analytical and consultative only. Although produced by organizations that accredit, *it is not a statement of accreditation standards, policies, or processes, and must not be referenced as such.*

Official accreditation documents are available from the separate accrediting associations for art and design (NASAD), dance (NASD), music (NASM), and theatre (NAST). The address appears at the bottom of this page.

Copies, Extracts

This document is not copyrighted. It may be reproduced in whole or part in the interest of education and cultural development. Any organization or institution may reproduce the document in quantities sufficient for its own use, but not for sale. Notice of credit to CAAA should appear on all copies.

Institutions and organizations are invited to use extracts from this document to develop or revise their own statements regarding children and youth, the arts, and public policy.

Further information about CAAA or its component associations may be obtained by contacting:

**NATIONAL OFFICE FOR ARTS ACCREDITATION
11250 Roger Bacon Drive, Suite 21
Reston, Virginia 20190**

**Telephone: 703-437-0700 — Facsimile: 703-437-6312
E-mail: info@arts-accredit.org
<http://www.arts-accredit.org>**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What Is the Issue?	1
Overview	1
Part I: Basics	2
Part II: Current Debates and Responsibilities	4
Part III: Clarifying Questions	6
Part IV: The Standards Anchor	7
Part V: Audience Development and Arts Education	8
Part VI: The Donor Connection	8
Part VII: Leadership Opportunities for Higher Education	8
Acknowledgments	10

Children and Youth, The Arts, and Public Policy: Present Urgencies For Higher Education

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

Arts education for children and youth is critical to the future of our civilization. But what does arts education mean? Is it anything anyone will fund? Or, does it mean study, practice, learning, and individual competence? In educational settings, in the lives of students and, ultimately, in society, the answer makes an enormous difference. Given current conditions and recent events, the arts community in higher education must join with others at new levels of intensity to protect and defend the importance of study-based arts education for all elementary and secondary students. To fail is to court incalculable loss to all serious arts efforts in our nation for many years to come!

OVERVIEW

In the arts, as with everything else, the future will be in the hands of those now young. What will these hands want to hold and value? What role will the artistic mode of thought play in their lives? How will their knowledge, skills, and understandings of the various art forms support continuation of the great line of human achievement in the arts disciplines? How will they view their cultural responsibilities? These and related questions are critical matters for the future of creation, presentation, education, and support. Failure to maintain a focus on substance leads to dysfunction in any of these sectors, and since each sector is vital, problems in one affect all the others. Public policies, which include but go beyond government policies, are critical. Values, ideas, and decisions derived from them have vast consequences.

When one steps back and takes a look at the portions of the arts enterprise devoted to introducing, teaching, and learning, one sees a complex held together more by common goals than by administrative structure. This diverse, decentralized system includes curriculum-based instruction in schools, community education programs, and private studios as well as presentations of the arts in all sorts of conditions and settings. Ideally, in each community, all work together. Administrative coordination is not nearly so important as a shared agenda of substance, working room for various individuals and organizations involved, and dedication by each to the well-being of all. The issue is not so much location, institution, or organization, but what students are learning in and about the arts disciplines. Clearly, both study and experience are required to produce an arts education of substance. However, vast problems arise when public policy statements or funding initiatives begin to suggest that experience can be substituted for study or vice versa. Such a loss of distinction between formal and informal education has been a serious problem in arts education for over thirty years. Its origins and negative impacts have been analyzed extensively in various policy writings. However, this problem is still with us and, in some ways, growing by the day. Addressing it productively is more urgent than ever.

Institutions that develop professionals for careers in the arts have a tremendous stake here. They prepare artists who will make most of their living through teaching, creation and/or presentation. Higher education has deep interest in arts education programs that identify talented individuals in the elementary and secondary years, and in all community-based efforts to prepare the talented and interested for entry into collegiate-level arts major programs. Higher education must be equally concerned about the extent to which the general population has an in-depth understanding of the arts. And, higher education has

connections beyond itself into the community. It has a leadership role for arts education in cooperation with other teachers and presenters.

For all these reasons, higher education sustains severe short- and long-term damage when distinctions between formal and informal education in the arts disciplines are lost. Such distinctions are particularly critical now that more and more higher education institutions are working to prepare professional creators and performers to interact with audiences in all sorts of settings, including schools. This movement to help every artist be a better missionary for the art form, and for the arts as a whole, is salutary. But one serious danger must be faced by higher education institutions, and ultimately by all artists, whatever the extent of their missionary work: the function of introduction and exposure to the arts must not be substituted in elementary, secondary, or higher education for study of the arts themselves. To allow this substitution to take hold institutionally and pervasively is to produce destruction on many levels, the first being the general level of public knowledge and skills. To take this road is to shoot the artistic enterprise in the head.

Unfortunately, decisions about study and experience are made in a policy context that contains ignorance and manipulation, as well as different values about the arts. Leadership is difficult, grants beckon, and perceived short-term public relations necessities regularly triumph over long-term educational imperatives. However, one need only think back to what is at stake in the connections among children and youth, the arts, public policy, elementary/secondary education, higher education, and the future of our civilization to understand that fundamental necessities must be protected irrespective of all the political and social forces that may press otherwise. As artists and teachers, protecting a viable teaching and learning base for all is as much a part of our responsibility as our own teaching, practice, and learning in the arts themselves.

We face these challenges with a tremendous array of resources in people, expertise, and dedication, and with effective standards, formulations, and curricula for serious study. Presenting organizations abound in communities across the land. Part of our responsibility in higher education is to ensure that all these resources work together continuously on the large project of individual competence. The question is not the survival of the arts or arts education, but their future health expressed in artistic terms. The continuing major educational issue is substance—real knowledge and skills, what children and youth actually know and are able to do.

PART I: BASICS

The Importance of Definitions. What is arts education? Why does the answer matter? What is at stake for students and the future of our civilization? No matter the time, place, or circumstance, these questions are always central when decisions are made about relationships among educational content and delivery systems, study in the arts, and individual competence. This is why the definition of arts education is important. Decisions based on that definition determine what students do and do not learn. What they do and do not know, what they can and cannot do, defines the course and shape of civilization, in which the arts have always played a key role.

Why the Arts Are Basic. Perspectives on the three questions that began the previous paragraph vary a great deal, formed as they are by education, experience, and professional orientation. However, most individuals professionally committed to the arts and arts education agree that the arts disciplines, both separately and as a group, constitute one of the primary means for intellectual and cultural action. The arts join languages, mathematics, science, and the humanities as basic modes of thought, ways of working, and avenues for achievement. The arts are not made basic through advocacy. The arts are basic, due to the way the human mind works.

Educational Basics. During the recent past, more and more individuals have come to realize the extent to which the arts are basic to education. Connections between arts study, habits of mind, brain development, and a capacity for learning have all become increasingly understood. Since substantive, sequential study of the arts is the primary means of forging these connections, school-based curricular programs for all children led by highly qualified teachers have become more important than ever. These priorities are emphasized and supported by the current *National Standards for Arts Education* (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994). Representing the broadest consensus on K–12 arts education ever achieved in the United States, these voluntary standards describe what it means to treat the arts as basic subjects. Broad use of these national statements to produce state and local versions represents a major step forward for the future cultural advance of Americans as individuals and as a people.

False Substitutions. Maintaining focus on study, practice, and learning is not easy. Educational decision-making is not controlled by specialist arts teachers. Old thought and funding patterns that relegated the arts to less than basic status do not change overnight. Another challenge arises from the fact that the arts can be consumed and enjoyed without study. Of course, this is true of all other basic subjects as well. Although millions enjoy riding in airplanes without understanding the fluid mechanics that keep them flying, no one would seriously suggest that plane rides should be substituted for school-based study of math and physics. Unfortunately, such substitutions are explicitly and implicitly made all the time with respect to arts activities that provide entertainment, exposure, and enrichment, but not education. In all basic subjects, both experience and study are important. At best, they reinforce each other, but one is not a substitute for another. If the arts are to maintain and advance their position as basic subjects, this distinction must be clear so that those whose primary role is to provide arts experiences and those whose primary role is to lead sequential arts study are working in mutually supportive ways.

Policy Impact. These distinctions and relationships are critical matters for those who formulate public- and private-sector policies that affect arts education and the arts. It is counterproductive to claim basic status for the arts and then develop policies that undermine the importance of artistic and academic content, regular instruction, and time on task. To say that math must be taught daily by qualified teachers while the arts can be taught by two or three trips to a cultural institution is to demean the arts as subject matter, deny the arts status as a basic, and set a dangerous precedent for the devaluation of other basic subjects. The same devaluation can be accomplished by superficial approaches to teachers and teaching. While most people agree that years of specialized preparation are essential for those who will teach languages, math, science, history, and social studies, and while such specialist preparation has long been pursued by artists who are full-time K–12 teachers, much philanthropic and public relations energy has been devoted in recent years to promoting the notion that arts teachers can be trained in two-week workshops. No one would dare make this claim about anything truly considered “basic.”

Deep Engagement. We are now faced with a difficult prospect. Those concerned with the arts and arts education, joined by many deeply concerned about the future of our culture, want to see the arts become central to education. The problem is that programs focused in entertainment, enrichment, and exposure, as important and vital as they are, can never be the sole content of a basic education in any subject—not because these goals are wrong, but simply because they are not enough. Although they provide pleasure, access, and inspiration to consume or get directly involved, they do not address the content of the arts or engage students in intellectual, creative, and developmental benefits of arts study.

The *National Standards for Arts Education* and many other statements consistent with it document the kinds of studies that develop mind as well as heart. They call for the development of ability to communicate in the arts forms and an understanding of historical achievements and analytical techniques. They focus on developing means for creative connections and integrations within and among the arts, and between the arts and other subjects. They are based on the premise that the arts are a basic way of knowing and working in the world.

Regular Study. In order to accomplish this knowledge and skill development for students, delivery systems must be structured and supported to stay at the task of developing competence regularly and sequentially, year after year. Developing these capacities in our young people requires policies that provide unequivocal support for regular study and practice, supplemented as much as feasible by the highest-quality experiences. To fulfill principles of democracy, all children deserve these opportunities. Policies which remove arts education from the public schools and replace it with nothing or with a few random arts experiences for students are simply widening the educational gulf between the haves and the have-nots. Wrongheaded policies can make both the arts and arts education fragmenters rather than builders of community. Therefore, it is critically important to begin with what students should learn, rather than which institutions should get paid for interacting with them. The fundamental delivery system and the basic agenda are not to provide employment for adults but rather to develop knowledge and skills in students. The basic purpose is not to create consumer habits that favor arts presenters, but rather to develop artistic technique, intellectual competence, and cultural wisdom. The primary goal is not advocacy, but education on the same terms that is meant for all other basic subjects.

An Important Distinction. When policy makers fail to make distinctions among entertainment, exposure, and enrichment on the one hand, and education on the other, they exacerbate many negative conditions for the arts, arts education, and thus for civilization. As those in the sciences and other basic fields have found, the distinction is important because of its utility in crafting wise policies so that each function can best support the others across the board. To fail to make the distinction or, worse, to act as though exposure is equivalent to study not only demeans the arts and diminishes student learning, it also pits professional teachers of the arts and their organizations against professional artists, presenting institutions, and their organizations. Such conflict diverts energy and wastes precious resources. Today, those who have committed their lives to developing knowledge and skills in students seem equally committed to maintaining the presence and growth of arts study as basic education, with all that is implied concerning content, curricula, time on task, involvement of professional full-time teachers, and expectations for student achievement in the subject matters of the arts. Superficial proposals that distort educational realities are sure to face increasing opposition.

PART II: CURRENT DEBATES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Funding Pressures. The above analysis articulates what seems to be a common stance among those engaged professionally in teaching the arts disciplines. Recently, political and funding pressures have been pushing arts councils, arts presenters, and their organizations to ever bolder assertions about the ability of what they offer under the rubric of education to replace the kind of knowledge and skills development that can only be obtained by sequential study under the guidance of qualified teachers in K–12 schools and elsewhere. Part of this new boldness is surely the result of desperation about the prospect of losing the National Endowment for the Arts. For some in the arts community, no price seems too great to pay to maintain the agency’s continuing presence. For the time being, the survival issue has been resolved and the NEA will continue. However, the matters we are discussing will come up again at the federal level in future discussion about the NEA and in forthcoming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Range of Views. Individuals in the arts and arts education communities cover the spectrum of opinion about the role and value of federal, state, and local arts agencies, the private philanthropies that share the arts agency value system, and about the various historical, political, sociological, and philosophical perspectives that underlie any particular formulation of the work carried out by this policy complex. For example, feelings may be quite different depending on whether one is talking about a particular arts agency in 1968, 1977, 1985, or 1997. There is also a broad range of views about presenting organizations

and their roles in entertainment, exposure, enrichment, and education. The presenting and funding worlds also exhibit a broad range of views concerning education.

Appropriate Roles. Whatever particular views they may hold, professional arts teachers at all levels are deeply involved in artistry and teaching, in educational and artistic institutions, and in education and arts policy. They have deep responsibilities for maintaining connections and balances in various settings so that study and experience in, of, and about the arts build competence and generate continuing commitment as well as provide momentary pleasure. It is profoundly foolish and tragic when sequential arts education efforts led by such teachers are demeaned, damaged, and even destroyed in order to “save” governmental arts agencies, or even to promote or fund arts presenting institutions. On the other hand, to imply that presentations of the arts have no role in the development of sensibilities, knowledge, and skills is both false and ludicrous. Instead of division, what is most needed in local communities is reason and balance in these matters.

Current Dangers. Such leadership is particularly important because, during the 1997 appropriations process for the National Endowment for the Arts, public and private purveyors of exposure and enrichment programs made public statements that (1) distorted the research connecting arts study with brain development, (2) maintained that the existence of arts programs in all schools depended on the continuation of the National Endowment for the Arts, and (3) supported draft legislation that would have essentially restructured the Endowment as an arts education agency, with arts education implicitly defined as either exposure and enrichment or the use of the arts to teach other “real” subjects. When challenged on these dangerous distortions and counterproductive policy directions, these same individuals and organizations pursued them with greater conviction and falsified the positions of the challengers, both in the halls of Congress and more publicly. Although challenges prevented restructuring the NEA, both the arts and arts education benefited (the NEA is still an arts agency). Yet, concern remains that such distortions and bad policies will continue to be spin-doctored and promulgated with all the glitz that celebrities, socialites, and foundation money can ensure. Cleverly crafted, often subtle, public relations barrages against arts study (and concomitantly against school-based programs and the roles of specialist arts teachers and those who prepare them) are ubiquitous at the national level. The local record varies. Left alone, these conditions portend storms for all, and tragic ruin for some.

Mixing Functions Properly. In pursuing a more productive approach, it is critically important to remember that what is at stake is what students learn. Others must be convinced that student learning is the central thing. More can be so convinced if all involved work together effectively. Artists and arts organizations must be supported, but not at the price of abandoning regular, curriculum-based arts study for pre-K–12 students. Fortunately, there is no need to make such a false substitution. Mixing functions in the wrong ways will hurt everyone eventually. We hope that work at the national level will be successful in drawing everyone back from the policy war which at times seems inevitable in the aftermath of recent exchanges. Our purpose in this paper is to clarify these issues and their present status in the national policy arena, to discuss what is at stake, and to propose reasonable distinctions that keep functions clear.

PART III: CLARIFYING QUESTIONS

As a start, we present the following questions that might be used to analyze proposals either implying or indicating a focus on arts education for children and youth:

1. Does the program, policy, or activity treat the arts disciplines with the same seriousness as English, math, science, and other basic subjects?

Student learning in the arts must be supported by sequential curricula, regular time on task, qualified teachers, sufficient resources, and high expectations in the same manner as all other basics. Any school-based program that fails to do this works against arts education, the arts, and the cultural development of individuals. The *National Standards for Arts Education* provide one working formulation of what is taught when the arts are basic.

2. Does it make clear distinctions and appropriate connections between formal education on the one hand and entertainment, exposure, and enrichment on the other?

There must be no implications in policy, practice, or public relations materials that experience is a substitute for study, or vice versa. To make such substitutions demeans the arts and relegates them to frill status in educational settings.

3. Does it respect and promote the arts as disciplines worthy of study in their own right and on their own terms, more than use of the arts to accomplish other educational goals?

As with all other basic subjects, the more competence in the disciplines themselves, the more that competence can be connected to other uses and fields. Competence in math itself is necessary for mathematical applications across all disciplines. The arts are no different. Counting ballet shoes to learn math is not arts study, any more than counting grammar textbooks is English study. Pretending otherwise is false and extremely harmful to the development of knowledge, skills, and values positive to the arts.

4. Does it focus on arts education or arts advocacy?

Advocacy is important, but it is not the reason for, or the content of, arts education. Advocacy works to convince. Education works to teach. Advocacy encourages belief. Education encourages and enables individual competence and thought. Advocacy is centered on support mechanisms and fundraising. Education is centered on making and understanding art itself. Obviously, advocacy and education can and ought to work together, but substitution does not work and must not be promoted or funded.

5. Does it recognize and support the only existing delivery system that matches the nature of the educational task to reach all children and youth?

The basic resources necessary for school-based learning in the arts are present in most American communities. The most critical resource is teachers who are qualified in the arts themselves by virtue of long study and practice in the discipline and who are *prepared and willing to devote their professional lives to the daily work of building competence, student by student*. These teachers represent the largest artist-in-residence program in the world. Those who work in public schools are supported by local education dollars, prepared and nurtured in higher education programs throughout the land, joined together in large state and national organizations focused on the arts and teaching, and inheritors of a magnificent legacy from their predecessors who established, built, and sustained K–12 arts education long before the appearance of public and private grants programs. These specialist arts teachers and the programs they lead constitute the only system that can deliver

substantive arts education to *all* children and youth. Thinking or acting as though this delivery system does not exist, or is insignificant, or unprofessional, or in decline is wrong, both because these notions are false and because they corrode local support for programs that lead students to real knowledge and skills. The benefits of this great system of basic arts education for all need to be returned to or established in communities now without it. Current or projected absence must not become an excuse for treating

K–12 arts education superficially. As essential as they are, other community institutions, private teachers, and presenting organizations are not a substitute.

6. Are claims made to support or evaluate the policy accurate and based on student learning?

Common effort to support arts education is diminished and sometimes thwarted when attempts are made to substitute arts marketing techniques for sound educational effort. Distorted or overstated claims are eventually counterproductive; they are found wanting and lead to public mistrust. Honesty also includes fair representations about responsibilities and achievements, willingness to give responsibility and credit to those in other communities of the arts whose programs we do not control, fund, or otherwise influence. Arts councils and presenting organizations must sustain policy support for regular school-based instruction, not minimize, compete, or worse, stand aside while it is cut, quietly hoping for opportunities to provide or gain funding for entertainment, exposure, or enrichment programs they provide.

7. Does the program or policy promote clarity of roles and thus common effort among various groups and organizations that teach and present the arts?

For reasons already stated, any program labeled as arts education that substitutes experience for study sets people who should be working together in conflict. The same is true when advocacy is substituted for education, artists-in-schools for arts teachers in school, and grants programs for long-term school board support. These substitutions produce divisions among those deeply concerned about the arts. The result is polarization and a tragic diversion of energies that should be dedicated toward common cultural advance.

PART IV: THE STANDARDS ANCHOR

In working on these issues, it is critical to understand the role played by standards. Today, standards are controversial. Too many individuals and organizations cannot separate standards—a set of common goals for learning—from standardization—minute regulation of curricula, lesson plans, and evaluation, all overseen by a pulverizing bureaucracy. Indeed, when misused, standards of any kind can become a counterproductive nightmare. In their best and most reasonable manifestation, however, standards indicate what is important and what is expected. Standards often express professional consensus, but they also serve to define common bodies of knowledge and skills for those who are not professionals. The presence of a consensus-based set of standards states: ‘this is the content and these are the expectations for serious education and work in this field.’

Standards set specific goals against which specific educational efforts and experiences can be measured. Standards are a serious impediment to the notion that arts education can be achieved without regular study. They are an anchor that prevents foundering in shallowness, that holds education to a solid foundation of content. Therefore, in the policy area we are discussing, it is important to be sophisticated when analyzing comments and proposals about standards, whether the *National Standards for Arts Education*, or the foundational documents for the 1998 National Assessment for Educational Progress evaluation of K–12 arts education, or the standards of the arts accrediting agencies for teacher preparation, or any set of state or local standards. Because standards are so central to maintaining

appropriate distinctions and connections between formal and informal education, it is critical for all in higher education to ensure that revisionary efforts do not deprive current standards statements of their focus on serious study and practice. While almost any formulation can be improved, it is important not to let “improvement” become a Trojan horse bringing about loss of substance.

PART V: AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND ARTS EDUCATION

Audience development has become an increasingly important goal, especially for the outreach programs of visual and performing arts presenters. Major foundations are also involved. Audience development is usually centered on advertising technique and community interaction rather than on formal educational process. Its first goal is participation, not knowledge and skills development. Again, the policy issue is not choosing between audience development and arts education, but rather a clear understanding that one is not the other. Arts education usually develops audiences better than audience development programs, but education requires a long-term investment, while the need for audience support is almost always urgent. Higher education has a serious interest in keeping the two functions clear and helping all in a community understand that both types of effort are necessary to develop understanding, support, and, ultimately, long-term security.

PART VI: THE DONOR CONNECTION

Almost all artistic enterprises rely to some extent on the goodwill and generosity of donors. Today, many causes compete with each other; donors have many choices beyond the arts. In this competitive atmosphere, it is important to maintain the continuity of donor commitment. Wrong moves can be expensive. Danger lurks when donors are convinced that the arts are education, or that informal arts education is all there is to arts education, or that specialist arts teachers can be bypassed, or that school-based curricular programs need leadership from instead of partnership with arts agencies, foundations, and presenting organizations. These beliefs can lead to projects that produce strife that, in turn, lowers interest in the arts and arts education, formal or informal. Worse scenarios include demeaning specialist arts teachers and threatening their positions while claiming to advance arts education. For any community, this is a sure recipe for backlash, failure, and a continuing burden of bad history. Less is not more; cachet is not a substitute for competence. Higher education has important responsibilities to exert constant diplomatic pressure to keep funding and substance working together.

PART VII: LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Futures issues concerning education and values building among the general population are symbiotically connected to the arts work of every college, conservatory, professional school, or university. The following leadership ideas may be helpful in addition to the regular stewardship exercised in the normal course of professional and general education:

- Ensure that faculty, administrators, and especially students understand what is at stake in the issues discussed above. Promote artistic citizenship that respects the essential work of others in the field. Seek to develop an ethos of mutual support for promoting all the elements necessary for in-depth cultural advance.
- Develop projects and programs that provide examples of such cooperation within the unit itself.
- Explain distinctions and connections between experience and study to everyone who will listen, particularly public and private funders and lay persons who support the arts in your community. Approach values building as you would fund raising, with written materials, speeches, personal visits,

program inserts, advertising, and other means. Remember that few people will make the direct connection between study and the art they are seeing or hearing unless someone makes it for them.

- Help all understand that common efforts to expand the scope and depth of both study and experience is the goal. For example, it is foolish to allow study-based programs and resources to dwindle and then fight over the ever-diminishing remainder, or over what short-term funding becomes available to address some small part of a fractured whole.
- Promote the health of all parts of the educational delivery system for the arts in your community, working always to promote mutual support that leads to true reciprocity that leads to trust that leads to substantive partnership. Accept no plan, grant, or idea that either tears down broad access to formal arts education for all K–12 students, or uses the loss of such access as a reason for substituting informal experience for regular sequential study led by qualified teachers.
- Lead or participate in local or statewide development of principles that make clear the necessity of basing educational work in the arts for children and youth fundamentally on study and practice. Publish such principles and distribute them widely. Take legislators and school board members to lunch and talk with them. Don't wait for a crisis.
- If necessary, help leaders of presentation organizations, arts councils, foundations, and other policy players understand the fundamental nature of principles outlined herein and the multiple dangers of confusing, conflating, or substituting experience for study. You may lose in a particular encounter, but never give in on the principle.
- Remember that the state of the arts in the United States is produced by the aggregate of millions of local decisions every hour of each day. Despite all illusions that may exist to the contrary, there is no central source of authority or power dictating the future of the arts, nor is there any need for one. For this reason, what you, your colleagues, and your students do about these issues is critical to what happens next week, next month, next year, and all the years to come. One need only remember that to abandon the cause of substantive teaching and learning for as many citizens as possible is to turn around and walk away from our own reason for being, not just as educational institutions, but as artists, teachers, and individuals committed to something better, something higher than what we have now.

August 1998
Reprinted May 2009

Acknowledgments

This analytical document was a product of 1998 deliberations of the Council of Arts Accrediting Associations, whose members appear below:

At the time of original publication, the following individuals were officers of these organizations:

NASAD:

Sally Lawrence, *President*
James Broderick, *Vice President*

NASM:

William Hipp, *President*
David Tomatz, *Vice President*

NASD:

Patricia Knowles, *President*
Clara Cravey, *Vice President*

NAST:

James Steffensen, *President*
Kathleen Conlin, *Vice President*

Samuel Hope serves as chief staff officer of the Council of Arts Accrediting Associations, and was the principal author of this document.