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Art Education and the Effective Schools Research: Practical Strategies for Including Art in School Improvement Efforts

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In the decade of the 1990s schools will be influenced, in part, by two trends. One will be the continued emphasis on school improvement. School improvement efforts in the 1980s were greatly influenced by the effective schools movement, and we believe this trend is likely to continue. Second, we believe the coming decade will be characterized by an increased awareness and emphasis in the arts. John Naisbitt

and Patricia Aburdene, in their book *Megatrends 2000* (1985), observe:

> *Time was you prayed your child would not become an artist, a musician, or an actor. But the arts boom has opened up a wealth of new career opportunities. Between regional orchestras and local acting troupes, young people have a better chance to make a living (albeit modest) doing what they love.*
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> *"The number of painters, authors, and dancers increased some 80 percent over the past decade — three times faster than the growth rate for all occupations and well above the growth rate for other professionals," writes University of Maryland sociologist, John P. Robinson, in* American Demographics.
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> *Between 1960 and 1980 the U.S. work force increased 43 percent, while the number of artists, writers, and entertainers shot up 144 percent.*
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> *Even during the 1980's, when the United States created new jobs at an unparalled pace — 16 million between 1983 and 1988 — jobs in artistic careers outpaced overall job growth.*

At first glance, these trends are seemingly contradictory. Some observers believe that the effective schools research is "too narrow" and places an undue emphasis on the "basic skills." They believe that the flip side of the increased test scores that result from the effective schools programs is a decreased emphasis in the arts as well as other areas of the curriculum.

We do not believe this has to be the case. We can find no evidence whatsoever to support the idea that effective schools proponents favor a decreased emphasis in the arts. What we do find is this: As school districts and individual schools set out to create better and more effective schools, the role that the arts will play in this effort must be addressed squarely and up front. Otherwise, other curricular areas will take precedent and the arts will, indeed, suffer. We believe the arts can flourish in schools where the effective schools research is viewed as the basis for school improvement efforts. We concur with Ernest Boyer (1988, p. 2) who made the following observation in *Toward Civilization*, a report on arts education published by the National Endowment for the Arts:

> *Art is humanity's most essential, most universal language. It is not a frill, but a necessary part of communication. The quality of civilization can be measured through its music, dance, drama, architecture, visual art and literature. We must give our children knowledge and understanding of civilization's most profound works.*

The Effective Schools Movement

In 1979 Michael Rutter and others published results that directly challenged the assumption that schools make very little difference in student achievement. Although a few studies done as early as 1974 had examined school practices and academic achievement, Rutter's *Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and Their Effects on Children* (1979) brought the issue of effective schooling practices to the forefront. Additional studies by Brookover and Lezotte (1979) and Phi Delta Kappa (1980) supported Rutter's findings. Ron Edmonds's (1979) research on school effectiveness may have contributed more than any other study to the widespread recognition that what schools do affects the achievement of students.

Edmonds identified five variables that correlate positively with student achievement: (a) strong leadership by the principal, particularly in instructional matters; (b) high expectations of students; (c) an emphasis on basic skills; (d) a safe and orderly environment; and (e) the frequent, systematic monitoring of student achievement.

Since the first school effects studies were published, there has been a flurry of research activity regarding effective schooling practices. According to the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, their updated synthesis of effective schooling practices (1990) is documented and supported by more than 800 research studies and summaries.

As impressive as the sheer number of studies may be, even more impressive is the consistency with which the findings describe effective schooling practices. In the last decade the effective schools research has become the basis for a nationwide approach to school improvement. School districts and individual schools across the nation have developed school improvement plans based on this body of research.

Implementing the Research: Some Basic Assumptions

Although the interest in the effective schools research is impressive, implementing the research findings in a workable school improvement program is a complicated endeavor. One of the major problems facing those who are being asked to improve schools — superintendents, principals, and teachers — is that they are often unsure of exactly how to proceed. Since those who are charged with the responsibility for school improvement are having to not only learn the research but also develop a framework for translating the research into practice, it is critical that those who teach or supervise arts programs be actively involved from the very beginning in the school improvement process. If not, there is a very good chance that art will become merely an "afterthought" once the important decisions regarding the

school program have been made.

As one begins to develop a conceptual framework for planning school improvement programs, it is important to think about the assumptions that will guide the process. The basic beliefs one has about the nature of planning, decisionmaking, working with groups, and the role of the arts will have a major impact on the directions ultimately taken. As an example, the following are a few beliefs we have about school improvement that have formed the framework for our work with school districts:

- School improvement efforts should emphasize building from within rather than importing from the outside.
- School improvement efforts should offer options rather than prescriptions.
- School improvement efforts should recognize that practitioners have a knowledge base that is valuable.
- School improvement efforts should avoid useless busywork and meaningless paperwork at all costs.
- School improvement efforts should result in a realistic, attainable dream for the future for each school.
- School improvement must be viewed as a process, not an event.

One particular school district that has been involved in highly successful improvement efforts developed its plan on the basis of these asssumptions:

- The educability of all children.
- A common curriculum content by grade and subject.
- The school exists first and foremost for an academic purpose.
- If children are not learning, it is the fault of the school system — not the children.
- Certain educator behaviors elicit more student learning than other behaviors.
- Behavior changes can occur without attitudinal changes.
- Program requirements can create behavior changes.

Frank Hodsoll, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, makes these assumptions about arts education in the foreword to *Toward Civilization* (1988):

> *Arts education can help elementary and secondary school students to reach out "beyond prime time" and understand the unchanging elements in the human condition. It can teach them to see and hear as well as read and write. It can help them understand what civilization is so that as adults they can contribute to it. In a culturally diverse society, it can generate understanding of both the core and multiplicity of America's culture. In an age of television, it can teach our children how the arts can be, and have been, used. In a world made smaller by modern communication and travel, it can teach them how the cultures and civilizations of other countries affect attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. It can help our children develop the skills for creativity*

and problem-solving and acquire the tools of communication. It can help them develop the capacity for making wise choices among the products of the arts which so affect our environment and daily lives.

Time and again throughout the improvement process problems and roadblocks will occur and disagreements will emerge. At these times it is critical to refer to the district's basic assumptions about school improvement. Whatever the assumptions are, they should be the basis for decisionmaking and action.

District-Level Leadership: A Prerequisite for Success

While numerous individual schools have successfully implemented effective schools programs without any help or direction from the district office, it is very difficult to convince teachers that school improvement will be the major thrust of the district without the visible and vocal leadership of the school board and the superintendent.

Leadership for arts education is critical at the districtwide level. As major decisions are being made regarding the nature and direction of school improvement, someone must stake out a position for the arts. If there is a leadership void at the district level regarding the arts — if there is no advocate for arts education — there is a good chance that other priorities will take precedence. We are not saying the position should be one of touting the arts as the most important aspect of schooling. However, we are saying this: The role of arts education should be an essential element in any discussion about districtwide school improvement.

What should be the basic nature of district-level leadership? Clearly, district leaders must cultivate a culture for change. The superintendent is in the best position to promote, protect, and defend the district's school improvement efforts. If the superintendent isn't willing to confront those behaviors that weaken the quality, efficiency, and equity of good schools striving to become better, the school improvement process will ultimately end up being another dying fad.

We believe the district-level leadership for effective schools must manifest itself in at least three observable ways: planning, modeling, and monitoring.

Planning

If things are truly valued, plans are made to see that they occur. School improvement efforts will never be taken seriously as long as the efforts are

characterized mainly as "just talk." Planning should be viewed as a process for implementing the things that are valued the most.

At the district level it is critical to establish processes and procedures that lead to a shared view of what the entire district should become. In other words, there should be a shared, comprehensive view of the future for the entire district.

As an example, picture a large macrame design hanging on a wall This entire macrame represents the vision of the future for the district. Hanging from the top of the macrame are several strands, each representing a major division of the schooling process: curriculum, instruction, personnel, staff development, and so forth. Since the macrame is large and represents a comprehensive view of the district, there must be widespread collaboration in its creation. How tightly or loosely the strands are woven together, what dominant patterns are incorporated, and whether or not an artistic balance is achieved blend together to form an image of a vision for an entire school system.

In this vision of the future, what would be the role of arts education? Can the district dream into the future and describe an arts education program that will be in place 3 years from now? This critical question must be addressed in the early stages of any districtwide school improvement process. Resource allocation is an essential aspect of planning. While it is true that people plan for the things they value the most, it is also true that people spend their time and money on things that they truly value. The same is true with a school district. If, in fact, improving the schooling practices in a district is a core value, then resources must be provided to ensure the success of improvement efforts.

Likewise, if the district leadership is committed to improving the arts program in the district, resources must be provided. Resource allocation always involves a competition between important areas for limited funds. Hence, it is critical that a well-thought-out, articulate, realistic, and reasonable presentation regarding the resource needs for arts education be developed. It serves little purpose to make a strong case for the importance of the arts, but not receive the resources necessary to make the arts program what it should be.

Modeling

Modeling is the way leaders advertise their values. The *behavior* of district leaders will do as much as anything to convince those in the school district of what is *really* important. Do the school district leaders model the behaviors they expect from others? Are their day-to-day behaviors congruent with their professed values? These are critical questions in any effort to incorporate values within an organization. In *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge*, Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus

(1985) put it this way:

> *The leader is responsible for the set of ethics or norms that govern the behavior of people in the organization. Leaders can establish a set of ethics in several ways. One is to demonstrate by their own behavior their commitment to a set of ethics that they are trying to institutionalize.*

Philip Selznick (1957) observed that the essential problem of leadership is the identification of key values and creation of a social structure that embodies them. Modeling is the way leaders advertise their personal values, as well as the central values around which the organization operates.

If arts education is going to be an essential ingredient in school improvement efforts, then district leaders must model an interest in and a commitment to the arts. Otherwise, they simply will not be believed.

Monitoring

Finally, if school improvement is to be viewed as an important goal within the district, a plan for monitoring the school improvement process must be developed. Monitoring is the way leaders pay attention to the things they value the most. And what gets monitored gets done. Not only should the monitoring of the various aspects of the school improvement process be effected (including the arts program), it should be welcomed. This is one way the leadership of the district signals what is important. It is like saying, "We care enough about this program — we think it is so important — that we're checking on it to see if we're doing a good job and seeking ways we can do even better."

Also, monitoring raises expectations. One of the most frequently asked questions regarding the role expectations play in educational outcomes is this: How can we raise expectations within our school district? Part of the answer involves deciding what you value and then paying attention to those key values. If art education is to be improved within a school district, someone must be responsible for paying attention to it.

Building-Level Development Efforts

The effective schools research has had perhaps its biggest impact at the building level. Numerous examples exist of individual schools making a commitment to

school improvement based on the effective schools research. Many of these schools have done so with little or no support from the district office.

Perhaps the real hope for school reform lies not with national commissions of state legislatures, but with one building at a time making a genuine commitment to improve the quality of schooling for boys and girls. To accomplish this goal, building principals must not only be committed to school improvement, but must have the ability to organize and plan in such a way as to ensure that dreams become a reality. The leadership skills of the principal are critical. Much has been written about the characteristics, traits, and skills of the ideal instructional leader. Suffice it to say that the principal must be able to communicate, motivate, empower others, keep things in perspective, and do these things with warmth and humor. It isn't enough for the principal to *want* better schools. The principal must turn the dream into a reality. This is typically done by working with a school improvement team.

School Improvement Teams

Most schools attempting to implement the effective schools research begin the process by appointing a school improvement team. The school improvement team becomes the vehicle by which all major decisions regarding the improvement process are made.

The size of the school should determine to some extent the size of the school improvement team. Teams typically range in size from 5 to 15 members.

The composition of the team is critical. Obviously, the team should represent the diverse groups within the school and the community and should include teachers and parents. Depending on the situation, representatives from other groups may also be included. For example, secondary school teams would want to include students and, perhaps, representatives from the business community. A district-level administrator is often viewed as an important person to have on the team.

Team members should be selected on the basis of their ability to influence various subgroups within the school. It is advantageous to involve team members who are highly respected individuals and whose opinions count.

Team members should possess the ability to envision a broad perspective. Remember, the goal of the school improvement team is the improvement of the total educational experience for all students. Individuals who can only see one side of an issue or who are interested in fulfilling their own particular agenda will not provide the kind of leadership needed.

We believe it is important that the principal serve as the leader of the school improvement team. The principal must be able to mold the team into a cohesive group that is based on trust, openness, and consensus decisionmaking. At the same time, the principal must not abdicate the role of instructional leader of the school.

Developing the School Improvement Plan

If the launching of the ship occurs at the district level, raising the anchor and heading out to sea happens when a school improvement plan is developed. Remember: "If you want to sail the big ships, you have to go into deep water."

Although the school improvement team will provide direction for all the various activities associated with school improvement, the team's primary responsibility is to develop a school improvement plan. The goal is simply to cooperatively develop a realistic, meaningful, systematic, and comprehensive school improvement plan that is based primarily, but not exclusively, on the effective schools research. If the school improvement plan is going to become the framework for school improvement efforts, it is critical that those concerned about the arts program be heavily involved in the development of the plan. Nothing will substitute for active participation. Although there is no "correct" way to develop school improvement plans — teams have been successful using a variety of approaches — we believe the following process will result in a plan that is both workable and practical. Several schools have been successful using this approach.

STEP 1: *First, describe the school you seek to become, remembering to focus on specific areas.* Virtually all approaches to planning for school improvement focus on the importance of a "vision" or articulation of a "school mission statement." In their highly regarded study of leadership, Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (1985, p. 89) observed that a vision "articulates a view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organization, a condition that is better in some important ways than what now exists. A vision is a target that beams." It is a view of the school of the future that provides the organization with a sense of purpose and direction. Hockey great Wayne Gretzky notes: "I skate to where the puck is going, not to where it has been." The development of a process that results in both this common vision of the future and widespread support for the vision is where the quest for excellence should begin.

One of the problems many school improvement teams face at this point is that their vision of the school of the future might become too broad. Some teams write about "developing good citizens" or of educating students who can "function effectively in a multicultural, global economy that is characterized by ever-changing technology." These types of statements provide very little direction for individual faculty members or staff personnel.

We believe the school improvement team should be very specific in describing the school they seek to develop. The following is a list of some of the issues successful teams have considered in developing their vision of excellence. (Ob-

viously, each team has to develop its own list of areas that should be considered).

- Districtwide goals and plans
- Academic achievement
- Students' feelings, emotions, attitudes, self-concept development, and so forth
- Depth and breadth in the curriculum (i.e., the desired balance of emphasis on basic skills, the arts, physical development, social development, higher order thinking, programs for special children, vocational programs, etc.)
- Faculty involvement, pride, and morale (quality of work life)
- Quality and nature of parental involvement
- A safe, orderly, and drug-free environment
- An atmosphere of mutual respect and trust
- Quality of facilities

The desired role of arts education must be addressed in the development of the vision of the future. We believe it is critical that a consensus be developed regarding not only the visual arts but the performing arts as well. The school improvement team should address the following questions:

How do we define basic arts education? and What do we want our basic arts education program to look like 3 years from now? Without a consensus as to the ideal art education program, it will be next to impossible to gain commitment and support.

Reaching a consensus about the school you seek to become is a time-consuming endeavor. Some school improvement teams spend the better part of an academic year engaged in this process, while others can complete the task in 3 or 4 months. The following process was used by one successful secondary school in developing a school mission statement.

1. The principal reviewed the purpose of the task and described what process and procedure should be considered by the school improvement team.
2. The team and the faculty reviewed the findings of the research on effective schools.
3. Surveys and brainstorming sessions were held with teachers, students, parents, business representatives, and community organizations.
4. The school improvement teams categorized the initial responses into groups and wrote a draft statement.
5. The draft narrative was shared with the various constituents, and feedback was solicited.
6. On the basis of the feedback, the school improvement team revised the draft, and a final draft was ultimately presented to the board of education for their acceptance of and commitment to the statement.

Several benefits accrue as a result of describing the school you seek to become, but the most important one is that it helps establish an agenda for action. As Naisbitt and Aburdene observed (1985, p. 27), "It is easier to get from point A to point B if you know where point B is and how to recognize it when you have arrived."

STEP 2: *Determine the current state of the school in each area that was identified in the school mission statement.* Once the school improvement team has described what kind of school is desired in the future, the current state of the school can be evaluated to identify discrepancies between the reality of the existing school and the characteristics of the ideal school.

Although all areas of the school should be examined, particular attention should be paid to student outcomes. In analyzing student outcomes, the school improvement team should disaggregate achievement data in a number of different ways. The relationship between achievement scores and the socioeconomic levels of students should be examined. Data should also be examined by race/ethnicity and sex.

Student outcome data should include results from teacher-made, criterion-referenced tests as well as nationally normed-referenced tests. The school improvement team will want to analyze correlations between items on these two types of tests.

In examining student outcome performance, some areas of the curriculum such as art, music, drama, and dance, do not lend themselves to "accounting" measures such as standardized test scores. Yet, "quality control" is critical in these areas. Hence, the school improvement team will need to identify *indicators* of achievement other than test scores from these important areas of the curriculum.

This issue is of particular importance for arts educators. Because of the relative difficulty involved in "evaluating" the outcomes of a program such as art or drama, it is tempting to resist evaluative efforts by making the case that since arts outcomes cannot be "measured," student achievement in the arts cannot be analyzed.

We believe arts educators must be at the forefront in developing quality control measures for the various arts courses and activities. If arts educators do not perform this function, outcome measures will probably be developed by someone else, or worse, the arts program will be given such little emphasis that no one will care.

STEP 3: *Develop specific plans for closing the gap between "what exists and where you want to be."* In actuality, the school improvement team in an individual school is responsible for determining a number of improvement plans — one for each area of improvement. These plans are in writing and open to public scrutiny. They constitute the team's ideas for moving the school from where it is to where it should

be — rather like dreams with deadlines.

While many different bodies of research should be considered in developing various parts of school improvement plans, the effective schools research should be used to plan for improvement of academic achievement. The plan should include specific ways each of the effective schools correlate will be addressed in the school improvement process.

STEP 4: *Develop a school improvement calendar for a 3-year period at a minimum. Set improvement goals for various aspects of the improvement program for specific years. (It is unreasonable to work on everything every year.)* There is a saying that "the administrator who has too many goals has no goals." The school improvement plan should cover multiple years so that everyone can see the big picture, but should also be detailed enough to include specific goals and activities for specific years. Some critical areas will need attention right away, while others may be addressed during the second or third year. Yet, everyone should know that there is a plan and a timetable for addressing all of the improvement goals that have been identified.

STEP 5: *Develop a monitoring plan.* In many ways this is the most important step in developing a school improvement plan. Unless a monitoring plan is developed and implemented, the school improvement plan will not be viewed as being important. Leaders check on what they value, and keeping touch of the progress that is being made is one way expectations are communicated throughout the school.

Creating Winners and Celebrating Success

Terry Deal and Allen Kennedy (1982, p. 63) observed in their book *Corporate Cultures* that "in the absence of ceremony and ritual, important values have no impact." We believe it is vitally imperative for the school to develop mechanisms throughout the school to create lots of winners (both faculty and students) and celebrate their successes. Those interested in school improvement should make a systematic and sustained effort to celebrate the successes of teachers and students, both within the school and the larger community.

School leaders must recognize people's innate desire to be on a winning team and continually seek to provide evidence of their successes. There is much in education that is quantifiable — achievement test scores, passing rates, attendance rates, levels of student participation in cocurricular activities, and so on. A concerted effort to monitor, report, and extol the gains that occur in such areas will promote

a sense of excellence.

Those who dismiss improvements in such areas as insignificant are making a major mistake. The celebrations that recognize the delivery record of Frito-Lay employees or the sales achievements of Mary Kay Cosmetics representatives do not just recognize the delivery of corn chips or the sale of makeup. These corporate celebrations promote specific cultural values, establish norms for others to emulate, and convey a sense of the effectiveness of the organization and its people.

Effective companies use celebrations to promote the attitude that "we will succeed because we are special." As that attitude becomes ingrained in an organization, it is ultimately recognized by those outside of the organization as well. Deal and Kennedy (1982) illustrated this point with the example of the sales representative who says "I'm with IBM" rather than "I peddle typewriters for a living." Because of the outstanding reputation that IBM enjoys, the simple statement "I'm with IBM" serves as a source of personal satisfaction for the sales representative.

Furthermore, it heightens his or her expectations for personal performance. Deal and Kennedy concluded that the attitude "we will succeed because we are special" can be maintained only by continually celebrating achievements that reflect the values of the organization. Thus, those interested in promoting particular values within a school must always be on the lookout for indicators of the presence of those values. Teachers must be given evidence that their efforts are having an impact.

Effective leaders extol the virtues of exemplary employees day in and day out at the slightest sign of successful behavior. If a school is to be excellent, its administrators must recognize that one of their most important responsibilities is to identify and publicize the efforts and achievements of staff members that reflect the values of the school. There are at least three reasons why this responsibility should be given priority.

First, recognition improves the morale of those singled out. Public recognition of exceptional effort is certain to have a positive motivational effect on the recipient of that recognition. In treating someone as a star, we increase the likelihood that the individual will, in fact, act like a star.

Second, recognition affects others on the staff. People tend to assess their own performance not according to some arbitrary standard, but in relationship to the performance of others. As Deal and Kennedy (1982, p. 38) concluded:

People can't aspire to be "good" or "successful" or "smart" or "productive," no matter how much management encourages them in those directions. They can, however, aspire to be like someone: "He's just an ordinary person but look how successful he is. I can be successful like that too."

By recognizing the performance of individual staff members, administrators provide other staff members with a model and motivate them to engage in similar behavior.

Finally, public recognition reinforces the values of the school. Recognition serves as a reminder of what is important.

Two points bear reemphasis. First, in order to be effective, an award program must provide for a wide distribution of awards. A school with only a handful of outstanding teachers will have a difficult time achieving excellence. The reward system should make all teachers feel that they have an opportunity to be recognized as outstanding. Second, an achievement need not be monumental to warrant celebration. It is important to vigilantly seek out the small successes — those teachers whose students performed well on a competitive exam or in a cocurricular contest, who attracted exceptional student enrollment, who modeled their academic discipline by practicing it outside of the classroom, who earned advanced degrees, who contributed to their professional organizations, or who were acknowledged as having made a difference in a student's life. These teachers merit the recognition of the school community.

Students, too, will benefit from the perception that they attend a high-quality school and that they are achieving success and recognition for it. Many of the studies of the effects of positive reinforcement and praise have taken place in educational settings. It is ironic that educators generally have failed to take advantage of the power of positive reinforcement.

The arts program offers one of the best opportunities to lead the way in celebrating the successes of students. If provided a variety of opportunities in the arts, virtually every student at one time or another can enjoy success. The art program can be the example for the rest of the school by demonstrating a belief that every student has a talent and that celebrating the successes of art students can become the basis for feelings of success and accomplishment.

Sustaining the Improvement Process

Those who set out on the quest for school excellence must do so with the clear understanding that they can never permit themselves to feel that they have arrived at their destination. As Peters and Austin (1985) observed, the bad news about the pursuit of excellence is that you'll never finish. Toynbee's (1958, p. 50) description of civilization also applies to the pursuit of excellence: "It is a journey and not a destination, a voyage and not a harbor."

How can school improvement be sustained when the goal is so elusive and timeless? The only answer is persistence. As Admiral Hyman Rickover (1985, p.

415) observed, "Good ideas and innovations must be driven into existence by courageous patience." Naisbitt and Aburdene (1985) contend that people are energized by the vision of an organization when it is not only powerful but persistent. When Bennis and Nanus (1985, pp. 187-199) asked 90 leaders about personal qualities they needed to run their organizations, they found that

They never mentioned charisma, or dressing for success, or time management, or any of the other glib formulas that pass for wisdom in the popular press. Instead, they talked about persistence and self-knowledge; about willingness to take risks and accept losses; about commitment, consistency and challenge.

Perhaps an analogy to farming is appropriate. Educational leaders should become experts in "farming," that is, planting the seeds of school improvement and cultivating, nurturing, and caring for them. We should practice patience and celebrate the unfolding of each blossom. We should believe that the quality of the lives of our families, friends, and neighbors depends on the success of each harvest — because it does. We must realize that one profitable crop will not be grounds for retirement. We will need to continually plan, monitor, and model the best behaviors and practices known.

It is an exciting time for education. More is known about good schooling practices than ever before. The research on effective schools has provided those who are committed to school improvement with a framework for making schools better. Also, we believe the effective schools movement does not have to be an intellectually narrow movement. There is ample evidence that the arts flourish in effective schools. In fact, we believe the interest in school improvement offers a unique opportunity to improve the quality of art education. J. Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery of Art, notes in *Toward Civilization* (1988, p. 2): "This moment of mounting concern about American education is the time to help our dedicated teachers and our schools transmit the significances and common heritage of the arts, so that our young people will not be denied the opportunity to become citizens this nation deserves."

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Elementary Art Supervision in The Los Angeles Unified School District

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Los Angeles Unified School District

Introduction

Being the elementary art supervisor in a large urban school district larger than the city of Los Angeles is no easy job. To improve art education in 414 elementary schools, the supervisor must play many roles — art education advocate, curriculum writer, program coordinator, workshop presenter, conference organizer, meeting facilitator, and district ombudsman for art. This involves working with staff members of all levels in the school district, as well as communicating with parents