



International Society for Education through Art
Société Internationale pour l'Education à travers l'Art
國際藝術教育學會
Sociedad Internacional de Educación por el Arte
Международное Общество Образования через Искусство
جمعية الدولية للتعليم عن طريق الف

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January 3, 2012

Dear Chilean Minister of Education:

This letter endorses the standpoints of Chilean arts teachers and InSEA members who share a commitment to including the arts as a vital part of all education reforms. The *International Society for Education Through Art* (InSEA) is an international association of art education professionals working under the umbrella of UNESCO. InSEA was initially formed following World War II to foster intercultural communication and collaborations. We now represent arts professionals in 61 nations; a network of international arts teachers who work together, share experiences, advocate for the arts, and work toward improving pedagogical practices. We believe art education is essential to a world-class education.

Creative activity in art is a basic need common to all people and art is one of human kind's most effective forms of expression and communication. Although children often communicate through nonverbal means, their proficiency will be advanced most through instruction by qualified art teachers.

Education through art is possible at all levels of development and through well-taught regular multifaceted art lessons, children learn essential tools that support full intellectual, emotional, and social development necessary for productive human beings in society.

The arts teach cooperation and encourage creativity. They are essentially interdisciplinary and enable individuals to freely participate in the cultural life of their communities. The arts are crucial to the health of any democracy, and to the creation of a world culture

capable of constructively addressing the world's most pressing concerns. The arts reflect individual experiences, but can teach students to discern injustice, and communicate their support for a just world. Culturally relevant arts education prepares students for the future, using sensory experiences as touchstones for developing self-knowledge, cultural histories, and global interrelationships.

The arts bring a significant creative component to traditional educational policies and offer alternatives to standardization, conformity, control, and the idea that there is only one right way to solve a problem. The arts bring into the curriculum the important notion that there are multiple ways to solve any problem and that there are many potential right answers. The arts give students the option of risk taking, which is essential to innovation in science, industry, and which is at the heart of the arts.

The arts can boost learning and achievement. Students who participate in the arts have been shown to outperform those who do not on virtually every measure and sustained learning in music and theater correlate to greater success in math and reading, with students from lower socio-economic backgrounds regularly reaping the greatest benefits.

Finally, professional artists in all areas of the arts—from fine art to architecture, fashion to computer-game design—influence people and cultures through their creative works. The creative industries are essential to cultures throughout the world and make up a significant part of economic development.

We strongly encourage you to think about the importance of the arts in your nation's educational policy, and to the world's children. We encourage you to think of them as future creative citizens who can think divergently, solve problems creatively, and serve the needs of a booming transnational economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah L. Smith-Shank". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Deborah L. Smith-Shank, Ph.D.

InSEA Vice President

Chair of the InSEA Advocacy Committee