

# Analyzing the Past: Looking for Change The History of Ohio Art Education Credentialing Practice

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## Abstract

This study brings the following question to the fore: How past curriculum paradigms solved problems? In the 1900s teaching drawing morphed into a diverse art curriculum. Then, Victor Lowenfeld found a developmental approach to understanding children's art. However, Elliot Eisner and Manuel Barkan challenged art educators to think differently about curriculum, bringing about new standards for teacher preparation. Today, however, legislation and curricular shifts stretch the carrying capacity of art education practice.

## The History of Ohio Art Education Credentialing Practice

Art education preparation in the State of Ohio includes a process of mastering the curriculum for teaching visual art Pre-Kindergarten through grade Twelve (PreK-12), including actual practice in a classroom. Licensure, the vehicle for art education curriculum, provides preservice teachers with a plan to acquire pedagogical theory, knowledge about art and actual classroom practice. However, since 1900, the curriculum constantly changed while credentialing remained about the same. Consequently, shifts in visual arts curriculum are interwoven with state and national legislation that effect credentialing preservice art educators. To understand the importance of these issues this study follows the history of Ohio art education curriculum practice from the 1900s to the present.

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Although this study is limited to curriculum events in Ohio it is representative of similar art education credentialing in many U.S. states in terms of legislation and curricular shifts. The purpose of this study is to bring the following questions to the fore: How have past curriculum paradigms solved problems? Does the existing PreK-12 licensure function to adequately promote a robust visual arts curriculum? What issues would occur if selective credentialing replaced the present PreK-12 Licensure?

## In the Beginning

In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, teacher training was limited and eclectic. According to Foster Wygant, art was being taught in Ohio schools in the mid-1860's. For example, in 1868, Cincinnati Public Schools hired Arthur Forbriger to become the first supervisor of drawing. Classroom teachers, under Forbriger's guidance, usually conducted drawing lessons in the primary grades, while classes in high schools were taught by Forbriger himself. Wygant also recognized the Ohio cities of Columbus and Cleveland as having notable drawing programs during the 1800's (Wygant 1983, 44, 52, 53).

By 1900, The Ohio Department of Education provided Provisional Certificates to teach in Kindergarten, Elementary, and High School (including chemistry, homemaking, mathematics, physical education, English, Spanish, etc.). Music and visual art were included under the rubric, Special All, meaning credentialed to teach all grades (Ohio Department of Education, n.d). Data on the number of credentials for art

teachers were sporadic until the 1960s. However, a 1929 report on Ohio High School Standards, indicated that visual art had evolved beyond Forbriger's drawing curriculum in Cincinnati:

*Art has so many phases, and so many levels, that it is difficult to outline any one content for the courses. There may be general courses in sketching and appreciation available to any who are interested. . .or there may be courses elected by those with taste and talent for art, whether design, representation, illustration, commercial art, painting, or art metal. (Winters 1929, 131)*

It was not until 1935 that the first Ohio Teacher Training Standards were established by the Ohio Legislature. Certificates (temporary, provisional, professional, or permanent) were given to eligible teachers and administrators (Cyphert and Nickelson 1984). It so happened that the year 1935 fell in the middle of America's Great Depression, and a limited teacher force had to cover multiple certification areas in order to meet various curriculum requirements. Moreover, this paucity of teachers continued through the 1940's as a result of World War II efforts.

### **Changes in Sight**

In an effort to strengthen Ohio certification requirements, a Committee on Teacher Education of The Ohio College Association, drew up a series of reports to investigate the possibility of making changes in the requirements of the Ohio State Department of Education for the certification of teachers (Cottrell *et al.*1950). Members were concerned about the present emergency certification provisions, especially the problem of elementary education certification, requiring less than four years of college preparation. They believed that preparation for teaching required

better facilities, adequate collegiate experiences, and a longer time than was presently available in colleges and universities. They also were struggling to find what was required to prepare a teacher in terms of professional and general education, as well as subject matter curriculum.

Therefore, by April 1951, the Committee on Teacher Education presented a plan to survey Ohio school administrators, teachers, and recent high school graduates, to find what changes should be made in the requirements for teacher certification. Because requirements were more numerous for the Specials (art, music, and physical education), it was decided to concentrate the survey on these three subject areas (Committee on Teacher Education, The Ohio College Association 1952).

Survey questionnaires were mailed in 1952 to 396 administrators, 898 Special teachers, and 600 former students, who attended these Special classes and were now in Ohio colleges. The survey also invited respondents to write their comments and suggestions on the back of the questionnaires. The following comments were among the most repeated responses:

Administrators said that professional education courses were too theoretical and impractical; teachers should be taught how to maintain effective classroom discipline; while in training, more field-work and practical classroom experience was needed; and, teachers of Special subjects must be able coordinate their subjects with the curriculum as a whole. Art, music, and physical education teachers felt that they needed more time student teaching; art teachers, especially, felt that they should be prepared for actual situations, where equipment and supplies were meager; and, all the Special teachers felt that they needed better knowledge of child growth and development. Former students felt that Special teachers lacked the ability to clearly teach abstract concepts and

techniques in their area of expertise; teachers also needed a better understanding of, and more sympathy for young peoples' problems, interests, and backgrounds; many Special teachers were teaching courses for which they were not prepared; and, teachers needed to get students to think; memorizing was not learning (Committee on Teacher Education 1952, 26,28,32). While the Committee on Teacher Education understood the certification problems of Special teachers, actual reform did not take place until 1980, under the auspices of state and national legislation.

This survey was concerning because it revealed skills that took art education from Forbriger's drawing lessons in Cincinnati to a different skill set needed for future art educators. Members of the Committee also knew that to be aware of the problem was to have some responsibility for it. From the vivid survey statements of: administrators, who thought more classroom experience was needed; teachers of Special subjects, who needed more time student teaching; art teachers who needed better knowledge of child growth and development; and, former students who felt teachers lacked empathy and the ability to clearly teach abstract concepts; it was obvious that a change in teacher preparation was needed.

In fact, the field of art education was failing to do the work that administrators, former students and the teachers themselves wanted done. Clearly, this survey showed that there was a failure to provide better preservice instruction, and mentors who would help future art teachers learn about teaching in the classroom. Such a response is cause for an argument to be made: Are preservice art teachers adequately prepared to teach in the public schools? This investigation into the weaknesses of art teacher preparation was prophetic. But, something much more engaging was about to happen.

### **The Unveiling of a Theory for Teaching Art to Children**

In the meantime, Victor Lowenfeld (1947) wrote his First Edition of *Creative and Mental Growth* to demonstrate to art teachers how a child's growth is intertwined with creative development and how creative development is intertwined with growth. Consequently, this approach to teaching children was a method resulting from the child's needs. Lowenfeld provided teachers with an understanding necessary for teaching art in an age-appropriate manner. However, as knowledge about children's physical, emotional, social, mental, perceptual, aesthetic, and creative growth expanded; curricular content grew from teaching technical skills to teaching the whole child. In Lowenfeld's Second Edition (1952), he added assessment charts of age-appropriate stages in each of the growth domains. These graphic charts prompted teachers to evaluate the progress of children's creative development. The Third Edition (1957), included additional chapters on discipline in the classroom, adolescent art as a course of study for high school, and therapeutic aspects of art education, including children who were physically and mentally challenged. In fact, Arthur Efland wrote that *Creative and Mental Growth* "became the most influential art education textbook of the post war era. Its success was due to the fact that it provided a developmental basis for understanding children's art" (Efland 1990, 235).

### **The Birth of Art Education Research and Curriculum Development**

However, 1957 was also the year that Soviet scientists put the first satellite, Sputnik I, into orbit, an event that forced Americans to reevaluate their scientific capabilities and educational system. This national crisis brought federal assistance to education. For instance, it

triggered the passage of the “National Defense Education Act of 1958,” which made millions of dollars available for educational reforms (Zahner 2003, 128,129).

Furthermore, the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was a primary stimulus for federal support of research and development in education (Madija 1977). As the 1960s evolved, art educators began to plan for what has since become a benchmark in the field: *A Seminar in Art Education for Research and Curriculum Development*, also known as the “Penn State Seminar,” sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Division of the U.S. Office of Education. The purpose of the 10-day seminar, held from August 30-September 9, 1965, was the stimulation of research and curriculum development in art education. Consequently, the lasting impact of the papers presented by Elliot Eisner’s, “Concepts, Issues, and Problems in the Field of Curriculum,” (1966), and Manuel Barkan’s, “Curriculum Problems in Art Education.” (1966), resonate in the Ohio Visual Arts Standards for today’s licensure (Ohio Board of Regents 2007).

The seminar’s Eisner-Barkan duo was fortuitous. Both found a discipline-based curriculum more relevant than Lownfeld’s theory of creativity and self-expression. Eisner, having recently received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, was entrenched with the theories of the University’s cadre: Ralph W. Tyler, John A. Goodlad, and Benjamin Bloom. All three researchers played an important role in shaping the structure of Eisner’s paper, and consequently Barkan’s response paper.

Eisner modified Tyler’s rationale to academic curriculum, subject matter curriculum, and course curriculum. The first level, academic curriculum, included what to teach and provided the ground rules for planning. Eisner warned that

“the place a subject matter is to have in the curriculum cannot be professionally determined unless one examines the context, both personal and social, within which that subject matter is to function” (Eisner 1966, 231).

In responding to Eisner’s academic curriculum framework, Barkan, Professor and Chair of the Division of Art Education, College of the Arts, The Ohio State University, argued that curriculum development in elementary and secondary art education was limited. Agreeing with Eisner, Barkan saw curriculum research as a translation of basic knowledge into an instructional program. He said, on one hand, “there is a massive task for curriculum development, and there appears to be ready resources to support it” (Barkan 1966, 243). On the other hand, art educators must be guided by an open theory of aesthetics, synthesizing this knowledge with the artist, the aesthetician, critic, and historian. The problem in art education is that “we have anchored curriculum almost entirely in relation to the artist” (Barkan 1966, 243).

Eisner’s second level of curriculum, subject matter curriculum, organized learning experiences. He suggested employing continuity, sequence, and integration, and then using these to guide time and teaching sequence. He referred to John Goodlad’s (as cited in Eisner 1966) organizing centers to achieve important concepts and generalizations in a subject. For example, organizing elements of different levels of complexity could provide sequence. Organization of learning could begin with simple to complex, similar to different, present to past, and so on.

Barkan’s reply to Eisner’s interpretation of Goodlad’s organizing centers, was to use Edmund Feldman’s (as cited by Barkan 1966) use of humanistic inquiry as the source for organizing centers, by asking questions about problems confronting people, such as urban, suburban, rural

life, or, the effect of many forms of available media. These issues, Barkan (1966, 245) argued, had “force for engagement.” Barkan then turned to Jerome Bruner’s (as cited by Barkan 1966) work to address the issue of structure in teaching art. The discipline of art was different from Bruner’s structure of mathematics and science. However, Barkan argued that “there are controls operating in competent work by artists, critics, and others engaged in art; and to this important extent, they engage in structured inquiry which is disciplined” (Barkan 1966, 244). He then explained that a problem-centered approach required the student to perform the task as a professional.

Eisner’s third level, course curriculum, included educational objectives “stated in terms of desired student behaviors as well as in terms of the content in which these behaviors are to be displayed” (Eisner 1966, 226, 227). More specifically, Eisner recommended that behavioral objectives be stated in: Bloom’s taxonomy in the cognitive domain, which orders behaviors in a hierarchy of complexity; or, Krathwhol’s taxonomy which orders behaviors in terms of internalization. Hence, teachers were in a position to alter the curriculum due to the availability of materials, their own competencies, and the students’ abilities to comprehend concepts. It was at the course curriculum level that the teacher was dominant. In fact, the data acquired by the teacher in the act of teaching could make better predictions for a specific situation than a formulation constructed for students in general.

In response to Eisner, Barkan (1966) designed a structure for visual arts curriculum at the goal level, which embraced John Goodlad’s organizing centers morphed into Feldman’s life problems, making them organizing centers for criticism-production and criticism-history. Students could use criticism to evaluate their own work and the work of their peers; find meaning in

the canon of art; and, read and review, perhaps in writing, historical accounts of art and culture. He was aware that centering curriculum on the nature of knowledge de-emphasized the nature of society; so, he introduced Feldman’s humanistic life problems as organizing centers. Feldman’s life problems, also the artist’s problems, were aesthetic in nature, and included description, visual design relationships, media, function, and critical interpretation leading to meaning. Instead of isolating criticism as a separate subject, Barkan used criticism as a catalyst for production and history. However, he detected problems emerging: the amount of emphasis, the class time allowed, and the order in which each component was presented. Barkan thought that answers lay in the knowledge of child development, social-economic conditions, previous learning, and the teacher’s expertise. He also believed that behavioral objectives held promise for the articulation of art education instruction, for they could be used to evaluate student involvement in production, criticism, and history. Since schools did not have the resources to develop the materials to meet this curriculum design, it would be necessary to develop collections of reproductions. Barkan added that materials would be needed in profusion, designed and packaged not only for use with students of different levels, but also to meet the various socio-economic groups.

By taking a critical look at the 1960s-art education practice, Eisner and Barkan challenged art educators to think differently about content and pedagogy in preparing preservice teachers. They assumed responsibility for the future of the profession by designing a conceptual framework for K-12 learners to ask questions about art: what is it; what is its story; how do I respond to what I see; how does it relate to my culture and to the cultures of other times and places; and, how can I produce works that reflect a vision of my world?

## Ohio's Art Education Credentialing Requirement

The aftermath of the "Penn State Seminar" led to a concentrated focus on the needs of art teacher education. In fact, all teacher preparation and certification requirements were being redesigned. In their study of teacher education redesign, Cyphert and Nickelson (1984) found that an Advisory Council of Teacher Education and Certification was appointed by the Ohio State Board of Education in 1967. The findings from studies developed under the auspices of the Advisory Council resulted in on-site evaluations of accrediting institutions at least once every five years, beginning in 1972. By 1974 the State Board of Education adopted new standards for teacher preparation,

These standards required all preservice teachers to participate, prior to student teaching, in 300 clock hours of field and clinical experiences. Also, cooperating teachers in preservice teaching experiences must have certification and at least three years of classroom teaching experience. Knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values served as the basis of the curriculum, and included: the act of teaching reading, as it pertained to the visual arts; teaching in a culturally pluralistic society; self-analysis of teaching performance; ability to deal with behavior problems; and, the selection, preparation and effective utilization of educational media (Ohio Department of Education 1980, 3301-25-02). Cyphert and Nickelson (1984, 7) described the reforms to be "so sweeping that the State Board of Education deferred full implementation until July 1980."

Meanwhile, during the 13 years spent redesigning Ohio Teacher Certification Standards, the Federal Government passed the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) (U.S. Congress, S.PL 94-142 1975). This legislation was important for preservice art

teachers because it included a provision that children with disabilities should receive a free appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. With a multi-age license this rule meant that preservice teachers would have to be familiar with accommodations, adaptations, and supports for children K-12, who were on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

In response to the influx of national and state mandates, faculty at The Ohio State University proposed a "New Undergraduate Major in Art Education," with or without credentialing. This response was brought about because the art education program was now "determined by the State of Ohio rather than by the nature of the field" (The Undergraduate Committee, *et al.* 1977, 2). Committee members held that State requirements were too restrictive for study in art education: "too narrow, too brief, and too vocationally oriented" (1977, 3). Moreover, art education now was not considered a major in the sense that history, chemistry, and mathematics were majors. The proposal coincided with the view that the field of art education had potential for discovering how society learned "about and through art" (1977, 4). Instead, the new methodology of "art education had locked itself into a rather small, narrowly confined curricular box of strictly vocational aims" (1977, 4).

This response from OSU faculty attracted the attention of policy makers, and in attempt to make the new standards and government legislation palatable to teachers and teacher candidates, The Ohio State Board of Education (1983) published a booklet, *Fine Arts and Physical Education: Minimum Standards Implementation Series*. Under the heading, "Visual Arts," the document began by describing three areas in which the teacher must have knowledge: information about the developmental needs and capabilities of students in kindergarten through twelfth grade;

knowledge about new developments in art and art education; and, knowledge about the larger social context.

A visual arts philosophy entailed: fostering personal development through art; transmitting artistic heritage; and, heightening awareness of art in society. While at the same time, students should also know how to express and respond to art (Ohio State Board of Education 1983, 29,40,42). The document also listed philosophy statements, program goals, scope and sequence, program objectives, and art content (subjects, themes, media, products, design, styles, and subject objectives). The most salient features from this enormous set of visual arts standards were the behavioral objectives for each grade and course taught, K-12. Evaluation included examples on how to assess the work produced, verbal responses to art, tests, student behaviors, and checklists.

A section about children on Individualized Education Programs emphasized that subject objectives (student will be able to) are a primary resource to be used in the development of IEPs. Evaluation should reflect appropriate subject objectives, IEP objectives, and learning styles, as well as the development of social skills. Additional areas of attention when working with children on IEPs included providing appropriate instructional experiences; net working with teachers of children with special needs; managing class so that students experience placement in the least restricted environment, and providing extracurricular activities to all students (Ohio State Board of Education 1983, 55).

By April 1985, The Ohio Teacher Education and Certification Advisory Commission issued "A Concept Paper for the Revision of Teacher Education and Certification Standards." Members of the Commission recommended that a restructuring of certification fields be implemented because of the absence of academic concentration

in, for instance, elementary certification; the lack of teacher preparation for middle grades in subject matter to be taught and learner developmental characteristics; and, the need for course work, as well as, "clinical and field experiences in teaching and learning appropriate to the age level of pupils for each certification field" (Ohio Teacher Education & Certification Advisory Commission 1985, 7). Also, in 1985 the State Board of Education adopted Minimum Standards for Elementary and Secondary Schools. Since that action, testing in English composition, reading, and mathematics occur in at least three grades. By 1990, proficiency testing was to be administered in grades 9-12 (Ohio Department of Education 1987, 5).

The following 1987 recommendations restructured certification fields: Early Childhood Certificate (prekindergarten through grade three); Comprehensive Certificate (grades 4-8, with a specialization in one or more subjects); and, High School Certificate (grades 9-12), with a concentration in a subject. However, the Art Certificate remained K-12 (Ohio Department of Education 1987, 8). As a consequence of credentialing redesign, the Visual Arts Certificate became Multi-Age License valid for teaching Prekindergarten through Grade Twelve (Ohio Department of Education 1996,14).

Although art education was not affected in terms of credentialing, except for the add-on PreK-12 license, it was affected by not having free access to teaching adolescents and early learners. These students were either taking more science, technology, and mathematics courses, or they were in early childhood classrooms that gave license for their classroom teachers to teach the visual arts.

### **The Birth of Discipline-Based Art Education**

As the revision of teacher education and certification was proceeding, the J. Paul Getty

Trust, a private foundation with programs dedicated to making significant contributions to the visual arts, stepped up to help art educators put the Eisner-Barkan theory into practice. Leilani Lattin Duke, Director for the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, advocated holding conferences and collaborative projects to move the curriculum reform forward by applying what the Trust termed, “discipline-based art education” (DBAE). This disciplinary approach integrated art history, criticism, aesthetics, and production. In the area of preservice teacher education, contracts were awarded to several American Universities, including The Ohio State University, to devise and implement plans for preservice teachers (Duke 1988, vii).

One of the first concerns of the Getty Trust was preservice education, and by 1987, a seminar was held in Snowbird, Utah. Because DBAE was being accepted as a new paradigm for teaching children how to create, understand, and respond to art, it was incumbent on teacher education institutions preparing future art specialists and classroom teachers to teach in this more comprehensive and substantive way (Duke 1988, vii). The Ohio State University faculty member, Nancy MacGregor (1988, x), chaired the seminar committee in planning the event. The first four days of the seminar were devoted to keynote addresses and panel presentations on issues having impact on preservice programs. In the latter part of the week, individual university teams convened to review their current programs and coursework; and, develop plans for strengthening either single classes or programs to reflect discipline-based art education. Consequently, among the most important features of the seminar were planning sessions. As a result, university teams developed ideas for curriculum redesign which seminar members took back to their home universities.

## Legislation and Curricular Shifts

After the support of the Getty Trust waned in the 1990s, national and state standards still included knowledge about historical influences on works of art, and the application of art criticism strategies to describe, analyze, interpret and judge works of art (Ohio Board of Regents 2007). However, the practice of teaching changed from teaching the canon of art to teaching about visual culture. Writing about the significance of visual culture, Smith-Shank advocated that the development of new visual genres and technological innovations for creating and accessing them, had multiplied the forms of information that were available. Even, ordinary objects, places, and events were visually-loaded aesthetic signifiers that had the power to “inform, modify desires, and educate, at least as well as high art, and in some cases, maybe better” (Smith-Shank 2004, vii). Furthermore, the visual culture paradigm morphed into action for social justice manifested through strategies such as “the inquiry method, project-based learning and dialogical practices” (López, Pereira, and Raw 2017, 33).

This mass of intertwining legislation and curricular shifts stretched the *carrying capacity* of the field of art education. By using the ecological term, carrying capacity, I refer to the areas within art education curriculum that must “operate to maintain efficiency and carry out its requisite activities. New requirements, initiatives, or activities that extend the system beyond its established limits strain its carrying capacity” (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development *et al.* 2007, 28). The carrying capacity of PreK-12 teacher education programs in art education is most critical for supporting and sustaining future teachers with substantial learning which results in powerful thinking and flexible, proficient performance on the part of students.

To answer the question, what should preservice teachers experience in their education, Linda Darling-Hammond (2000, 12) led a research team in studying seven teacher education programs that were acknowledged as exemplars for preparing prospective teachers. Some common features they found included: extensive clinical experiences (at least 30 weeks), a curriculum grounded in substantial knowledge of child and adolescent development, learning theory, cognition, motivation, and subject matter pedagogy, taught in the context of practice. One obvious feature, which was not addressed in the study, was the close age range of the students in each of the seven studies. No study included a PreK-12, range.

On the one hand, in the PreK-12 credential, the restructure of the teaching field weakens the already stretched carrying capacity of art education, especially in the early childhood and the adolescent components. On the other hand, if there were separate licensures for early childhood and high school art education, these licensures could provide new career opportunities for preservice art teachers.

The addition of an Early Childhood License in Visual Art would enable creative curricular visual arts experiences for children; which would expose them to a growth-promoting aesthetic environment by helping them develop executive function and self-regulation skills. These skills help young children to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and juggle multiple tasks successfully (Center on the Developing Child 2017). In her study, Thompson (2006) noted that the typical early childhood classroom harked back to Lowenfeld's developmental stage methodology. Most of all, a rich knowledge of developmental stages is needed in teaching young children. However, she cautioned that stage theories were founded on a culture-free assumption and

neglected to consider the cultural and social context of the art making situation (Thompson 2006, 228, 229, 238). Children need exposure to various materials; clay, paint, markers, collage materials, blocks for building, etc. She added that there is a need to study children making and interpreting visual images in the company of other children and adults in contexts where significant learning about art occurs. Communication with other children is necessary, especially as they discuss their seeing and making.

By the same token, the problem could be solved in another stretched area of art education involvement, by upgrading the already available Ohio Adolescence to Young Adult License, valid for teaching grades 7-12 (Ohio Department of Education 1996). The curriculum would also allow the preservice art teacher to prepare serious art students for portfolio interviews, and increase the percentage of students taking Advanced Placement courses. Consequently, a 7-12 visual arts teacher could build a career ladder leading to a Master of Arts or a Master of Fine Arts. With these degrees, art teachers could teach college credit courses, grades 9-12. Furthermore, Ohio high school students enrolled in college-level courses receive both high school and college credit. This policy of dual enrollment keeps students academically challenged throughout their high school career, and closes the gaps between high school and the university (State Board of Education Task Force on Quality High Schools 2004).

### **Forward to the Future**

Because of the need for depth of knowledge in the various stages of student development, future visual arts teachers may prepare for separate visual arts credentialing: early childhood, middle childhood, or adolescent. However, such a reform would change the cultures of classrooms, schools, and university art

education programs. According to Fullan (2016), the organizational culture would change. Cohen and Spillane (1994), also point out that in the United States, because of its size and diversity, local and state governments have tremendous force. If licensure/certification policy would change, it would come from change in the culture within the universities, the cooperation of local schools, and the governance of the states. However, a successful transition from one licensure to another would attract the next generation of art educators because it would imply a more rigorous definition of art education curriculum. It is only through a robust curriculum that the professional community of art educators will achieve a favorable outcome.

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