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#### IV. ARTS EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

## ARTS EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study has been to get a clear picture of arts education in schools, to determine needs and to make recommendations for improvement.

The report includes information and opinions from elementary classroom teachers, art, music, physical education and English teachers, principals, students and parents. Additional information was obtained from the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Minnesota Alliance for Arts in Education.

Information and data from both the Minnesota Department of Education and the Arts Survey sections of the report have been used in arriving at the recommendations.

The recommendations are presented in two sections. They are listed as recommendations requiring action by the Legislature, or local Boards of Education. Brief supporting statements or information from the needs assessment accompany each recommendation. Readers should refer to the body of the report for more detailed information.

### Recommendations/Legislature

1. **The Legislature should consider increased funding for the Comprehensive Arts Planning Program (CAPP) so additional districts may plan for arts programs, develop arts curricula and establish district/community partnerships.**

#### **Supporting Data**

The "1985 Evaluation Report on the Comprehensive Arts Planning Program (CAPP)" indicated that the thirty participating districts in 1983-85 made significant progress in improving arts programs in their districts. The CAPP model is compatible with the Minnesota Department of Education Planning Evaluation and Reporting (PER) regulations and has assisted districts in the PER process.

2. **The Legislature should consider providing arts education improvement aid to school districts. Districts could determine whether to use the aid to employ licensed art, music and physical education teachers, to develop written arts curricula or to provide arts education inservice to elementary classroom teachers.**

#### **Supporting Data**

In addition to the need for elementary arts specialists, elementary classroom teachers need additional help in integrating arts into the total curriculum. Eighty-two percent said lack of time for planning arts learning experiences is a problem, with 66 percent indicating it was a serious problem. Written curricula in the arts are essential to provide comprehensive sequential programs, yet they are lacking in about half of the art and music programs.

3. **The Legislature should continue funding artists in education programs through the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Regional Arts Councils.**

#### **Supporting Data**

Artist residencies in classrooms encourage cooperation and partnerships between education agencies and the community in providing quality arts education opportunities for students, yet only 19 percent of elementary teachers plan to use an artist in residence this year. Sixty-two percent of elementary teachers indicated they wished they had more access to artists.

4. **The Legislature should provide funds for a state school for the arts and related resource center. Students who have special talents in the arts should be provided with experiences and programs that will challenge them and enable them to progress according to their ability.**

#### **Supporting Data**

Eighty-nine (89) percent of elementary teachers, 80 percent of arts specialists, 76 percent of parents, 71 percent of secondary principals and 61 percent of elementary principals indicated that more opportunities for artistically talented students should be provided.

### **Recommendations/Local Board of Education**

1. **Every Local Board of Education should develop or adopt a written K-12 curriculum in each of the arts areas. Each curriculum should include subject area goals, learner outcomes, and have scope and sequence. Each would include the areas of history, production/performance and criticism.**

**Districts are encouraged to use available aid resources for curriculum writing. These would include the summer education improvement aid, the CAPP program and related publications, and assistance and publications available from the Department of Education.**

#### **Supporting Data**

Written curricula are lacking in approximately half the music and art programs. Three-fourths of the English and physical education respondents said they had no written curricula in creative writing, theater or dance. The importance of having written curricula containing goals and learner outcomes is illustrated by their inclusion in the objectives of CAPP and PER.

2. **Local Boards of Education should fulfill Minnesota State Board of Education rules and Minnesota Department of Education recommendations regarding time allocated to the arts.**

#### **Supporting Data**

As already indicated, many districts are not meeting the clock-hour requirements in middle and junior high schools. Survey respondents indicated that the amount of time spent in elementary arts education falls below Minnesota Department of Education recommendations, and that in recent years, the allotted time has been decreasing. Elementary art and music are taught 67 and 73 minutes per week, respectively, although the Minnesota Department of Education recommendations are approximately two hours.

3. **Local Boards of Education are encouraged to designate a number of days per year for teacher inservice and professional development. Inservice is needed in the following areas:**
  - a. **Incorporating learner outcomes into their arts instruction.**
  - b. **Incorporate historical and critical aspects of their subjects into programs.**

#### **Supporting Data**

Seventy-two (72) percent of elementary teacher respondents indicated that lack of training in teaching the arts was a problem, and that they particularly needed training in dance, drama and music. A majority of arts specialists also indicated interest in additional inservice or courses in their own subject areas. Art assessment test results indicate a need for assistance in teaching the historical and critical aspects of the arts.

4. **Local Board of Education are should consider using a portion of state gifted and talented grants for programs for artistically talented students.**

#### **Supporting Data**

Eighty-nine (89) percent of elementary teachers, 80 percent of arts specialists, 76 percent of parents, 71 percent of secondary principals and 61 percent of elementary principals indicated that more opportunities for artistically talented students should be provided.

5. **Local Boards of Education are encouraged to require one-credit of fine arts for graduation from high school.**

#### **Supporting Data**

Minnesota parents and educators support broad comprehensive education for their young people. Responses from all survey groups indicate strong beliefs that arts education is essential for all students (parents - 83 percent, secondary principals - 80 percent, elementary teachers and principals - 91 percent). Arts courses at the secondary level have appreciably declined in recent years, however, according to responses from secondary principals and arts specialists. Specialists cited lack of time in school schedules for students to enroll in arts courses, indicating competition with subjects currently receiving more emphasis.

6. **Local Board of Education should consider employing one elementary art, one music and one physical education specialist for each 400 elementary students. Small districts are encouraged to share teachers.**

#### **Supporting Data**

Fourth grade students in schools that employed art and music specialists scored better in these areas on statewide assessment tests. Nearly three-fourths of all elementary classroom teacher respondents indicated their lack of training in teaching the arts was a problem. The need for arts specialists varies among the areas of art, music and physical education, with art appearing most in need of specialized staff. Fifty-four percent of the classroom teachers indicated they were the only ones teaching art. Elementary classroom teachers are responsible for teaching all the visual art in 54 percent of the classrooms.

7. **Local Boards of Education should review the class sizes and teacher-pupil ratios of arts teachers which reflect the need for individualized instruction.**

#### **Supporting Data**

The National Council of Teachers of English has had a longstanding policy that creative writing should have no more than 100 students per day. The National Art Education Association recommends that elementary art teachers have a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:400-500. State music educators have been advocating changes in SBE rules to obtain reasonable and equitable teacher pupil loads. According to survey responses, music teachers teach more classes each day (six) than than other arts specialists and have greater average class sizes (41).

8. **Local Boards of Education are encouraged to include allocations in their budgets for community resources such as local artists, arts groups, and field trips.**

#### **Supporting Data**

Comprehensive arts programs should include a variety of firsthand experiences with artists, art objects, and places in the arts world. Yet, according to survey results, the incidence of these experiences is very low. The planned use of community artists or artists in residence ranged from 18 in percent theater and dance to 29 percent in music. Field trips to places of artistic interest were planned in 39 percent of elementary classrooms, 40 percent in art, 50 percent in music and 11 percent in dance.

9. **Local Boards of Education should ensure that all secondary students have equal access to elective arts courses, and are not prevented from taking these courses due to rigid class scheduling or other hinderances.**

#### **Supporting Data**

Seventy-seven (77) to 80 percent of art, music and creative writing respondents felt students had difficulty in scheduling arts classes. Of the student respondents not taking arts courses, 41 percent indicated it was due to lack of time. None of them replied it was because they had no talent.

10. **Local Boards of Education should designate a chairperson or coordinator in each of the arts areas or, at the minimum, designate a fine arts chairperson responsible for all arts areas.**

#### **Supporting Data**

One of the unforeseen outcomes of the CAPP Program was the value of having an arts education contact person in the district--the CAPP chairperson. This person acted as a public relations person to inform the community about arts education programs and events, and as an organizer to bring in information and programs from local, regional and state organizations. A music coordinator has been designated in every local district to receive and disseminate music education information to district music teachers.