



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Chair of Arts Education Council of Americans for the Arts Testifies Before House Subcommittee on Need for Increased Federal Funding for Arts Education

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Catherine Richmond-Cullen, Ed.D., Chair of the Arts Education Council of Americans for the Arts, testified today before the Labor, Health & Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives. Her testimony was given during a hearing regarding the need for increased funding in the Fiscal Year 2006 Arts in Education program of the U.S. Department of Education. The Arts Education Council of Americans for the Arts is a network of arts educators and curriculum specialists in communities and states across the country. Dr. Richmond-Cullen, an arts administrator with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, urged the Subcommittee to appropriate \$53 million for the Arts in Education program, citing these points:

- **Arts education works for children.** Research increasingly confirms the beneficial effects of arts education in several areas including, but not limited to, academic achievement. She cited the Arts Education Partnership's report, *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*, which includes 62 separate studies pointing to "critical links" between arts education and reading, writing, mathematics, cognitive skills, motivation, social behavior, and the school environment. She pointed out that these studies strongly suggest that arts education is especially useful for students who are economically disadvantaged and/or in need of remedial instruction.
- **Schools desperately need it.** Dr. Richmond-Cullen noted that even now, when the accountability and testing regimens of the No Child Left Behind Act have focused schools' attention on what some call "the basics," many schools understand that the arts are a core academic subject, that they are essential, and that they work. She noted that the U.S. Department of Education's first model grant competition generated a flood of applications despite the tiny number of awards, and, in the years since, the

number of applications has remained consistently high. In fact, the Department has only been able to grant awards to between 2 percent and 15 percent of those who apply. She stated that increased funding will at least begin to address that demand.

- **Arts Education provides businesses with trained workers.** Dr. Richmond-Cullen stated that with more than 578,000 arts-centric businesses employing nearly three million people, arts education becomes a critical tool in fueling the creative industries of the future with arts-trained workers. She noted that there are published research studies on the benefits of arts education that state that early learning in the arts nurtures the types of skills and brain development important for individuals working in the 21st century economy.
- **Arts education is being cut nationwide.** Finally, Dr. Richmond-Cullen gave statistics that show that schools are neglecting those areas of the curriculum that are not subject to the mandatory testing requirements of No Child Left Behind, despite increases in overall spending for K-12 education, and despite the substantial flexibility given to states. She further gave examples of headlines that continue to report major cuts in public school arts education programs across the country daily. She also noted that the National Association of State Boards of Education has identified this threat in its 2003 report *The Lost Curriculum*; and that in 2004, the Council for Basic Education released a survey of school principals in four states: fully one-quarter of them report that they have decreased instructional time in the arts. This number was confirmed last month in the Center for Education Policy's report, *From the Capital to the Classroom: Year 3 of the No Child Left Behind Act*, when it found that almost a fourth of school districts surveyed reported that time in science, art, and music had all been reduced.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

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