



## NEWS AND INFORMATION

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

01/24/2008

#### **Americans for the Arts Welcomes New Data to Support Arts Education Advocacy**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Americans for the Arts President and CEO Robert L. Lynch gave the following statement in response to the poll results released today from Lake Research Partners for the Arts Education Partnership. The results indicate that a large voter constituency supports developing imagination through arts education in order to help spur the 21st century workforce into achieving innovation.

“We appreciate the Arts Education Partnership for conducting this poll and concur with the results. The research Americans for the Arts has gathered over the past few years—including analysis the Harris poll conducted for our national PSA campaign “Art. Ask For More.”—found similar support among engaged citizens and led to the establishment of our national citizen advocacy effort called the Americans for the Arts Action Fund.

One of our main objectives is to support and secure federal, state, and local education policies that provide students a balanced education and prepare them to compete in a globally innovative and creative workforce. To that end we work with strategic partners of elected decision-makers such as The United States Conference of Mayors, National Lieutenant Governors Association, National Association of Counties, National School Board Association, and a national network of statewide arts advocacy organizations. We also provide resources and training for arts educators throughout the country who belong to our arts education network. These political and education efforts were manifested in the Congressional hearing we organized last year before a House Appropriations Subcommittee titled, “Role of the Arts in Creativity and Innovation.”

Americans for the Arts maintains that arts education develops the precise set of skills students need in order to thrive in a global economy that is driven by knowledge and ideas. Increasing numbers of high-paying jobs in the future will be centered on creativity, higher-order thinking, and communication skills. These themes were explored at our 2007 National Arts

Policy Roundtable, convened at the Sundance Preserve with Robert Redford, and will be further explored in a soon-to-be released study we conducted in conjunction with The Conference Board and the American Association of School Administrators. This data, scheduled for release in March 2008, will capture how Fortune 1,000 companies view creativity as defined within an employee's skill set and how employers identify it in current and potential employees.

Americans for the Arts has been working to encourage policy makers to take these actions:

- Declare the arts central to a balanced education. The next President needs to declare literacy in the arts central to an educated citizenry as much as reading, math, and science are considered now.
- Reverse the trend of fewer arts education classes. Formalize an incentive program to hire arts educators and strengthen the Arts in Education program at the U.S. Department of Education through revisions to the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Fortify arts education as a priority after-school activity within the 21st Century Community Learning Center program.
- Create resources for administrators to learn how to support the arts in their schools amidst a climate of high-stakes testing.
- Execute a "Benchmarking Arts Education in America's Schools" study, similar to Los Angeles County's "Arts in Focus" survey, of the nation's 14,000 school districts to establish quality and condition of arts education in America at the local level."

Additionally, the Americans for the Arts Action Fund, our initiative to engage 100,000 citizens in education and advocacy in support of the arts and arts education is working to:

- Raise the visibility of the arts and arts education on the campaign trail. In the 2008 Presidential race, five of the presidential candidates have written statements in support of arts education. These statements are available online.
- Publish bi-annual Congressional Candidate Surveys to assess the level of support candidates are will to give to arts education programs. These survey are published online and shared with advocates nationally.
- The Americans for the Arts Action Fund PAC, the only national Political Action Committee that supports arts and culture has contributed to over fifty federal candidates.

**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](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).

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