

"Visions of the Future: Education and the Arts" (2005)

Speakers

Richard Bell, National Executive Director, Young Audiences

Roderick Chu, Chancellor, Ohio Board of Regents

Richard J. Deasy, Director, Arts Education Partnership

Cyrus Driver, Deputy Director, The Ford Foundation

Milton Goldberg, Executive Director, National Commission on Excellence in Education (1981-1983), *A Nation At Risk*

G. Thomas Houlihan, Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers

Jonathan Katz, Chief Executive Officer, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Cheryl Riggins-Newby, Associate Executive Director, National Association of Elementary School Principals

Governor Mike Huckabee, Arkansas

Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu, Louisiana

Sharon Robinson, President & Chief Executive Officer, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Scott Shanklin-Peterson, Director, Arts Management Program, College of Charleston

Joseph Villani, Deputy Executive Director, National School Boards Association

Brenda Welburn, Executive Director, National Association of State Boards of Education

John Wilson, Executive Director, National Education Association

HUCKABEE: We need to make sure that people realize, that an arts education is not extra curricular, it's essential. It is an essential part of the complete education of every child.

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WILSON: I believe that the arts add an excitement to schools.

DRIVER: And they really need to be seen as part of the basics of a high-quality education.

ROBINSON: None of us have escaped the impact of arts.

WILSON: And I think what the arts do, is they actually parallel twenty-first century schools. And twenty-first century skills.

LANDRIEU: Well it's no surprise, that the areas that have the greatest economic growth and development are those areas that also have a very strong

development in the early ages of arts education. And there is a clear connection between the two.

VILLANI: What arts help develop is the expressive capacity in students.

WELBURN: Use the research and the data that shows that children who have excess and opportunity to an arts education curriculum are children who do better in all other subject matters; mathematics, reading, science.

DRIVER: Adaptability, flexibility, ability to work in teams and so forth.

HOULIHAN: Young people who can critically think.

CHU: To solve problems they have never seen before.

HOULIHAN: Who have an appreciation of the global world they live in.

CHU: Arts are the only place in education that we learn to deal with our differences.

BELL: The arts are unique as a discipline. They offer a different way of knowing, if you will.

DEASY: Arts have profound roll in developing our culture in our society within the school and beyond the school.

KATZ: And it our adaptive ability, ultimately it is our creativity, it's our ability to see a future that is different than the past, it's our ability to take what we know and re-piece it together, and use what we would call creative or artistic skills to do that; now that to me a challenge to the education system.

Skills for Learning and Life

HUCKABEE: In my own personal experience, if it had not been for an arts education, being involved in particularly theater and being involved in music as a student, I'm not sure I would be sitting here as the governor of the state. Because it did more than simply give me an outlet for certain levels of energy that I had, it also helped to build in me the discipline to learn, the discipline to do. And it also helped build in me a sense of confidence that I thought I never would have had, had it not been for those endeavors.

SHANKLIN: Many students that don't necessarily respond to a tradition math class or reading class or English class, might respond extremely well to those subjects taught through the arts.

RIGGINS: An active and solid arts program has been shown to assist a lot of those children, and especially children in urban environments, to learn, to learn more quickly.

GOLDBERG: It is absolutely crucial to develop a student population that is inventive, that can grope with ambiguity, deal with flexibility in the workplace, and has the skills to work well with other people. Those are things we, frankly, didn't say very much about in "A Nation at Risk". And one of my great problems with "A Nation at Risk", personal problems, is that we didn't say anything about the arts, except in passing. And that's something that I rue to this day, and so I have worked very hard over the last twenty years to try and make sure the arts are given more attention in the schools.

DEASY: One of the students, who was suspended from school frequently, actually, became involved in a drama and theater performance in one of the classrooms. The teachers discovered that that kid was showing up for their class and participating in the drama even though he had been suspended. He was sneaking back into school because the arts were what was meaningful for him and he felt responsible to his classmates to play his role in the play.

BELL: If a second-grader is learning new vocabulary, and they take the vocabulary that they already know and turn into the lyric for a song, they are going to remember that vocabulary and use that vocabulary in a much richer, more robust way than would be required to meet the minimum standard of vocabulary knowledge, if you will.

ROBINSON: Arts have always been used as a way to document important historical developments.

HOULIHAN: We know, at the policy level, that the arts can play a dramatic role in reducing drop-out rates.

SHANKLIN: We had a group of Mongolian college presidents and vice presidents visiting in Charleston. And we took them to visit all sorts of programs. The one that made the biggest impression on them was the Ashley River Creative Arts School. And they finally got it,...what the arts can do for young people. They were used to only the gifted being trained in the arts.

DRIVER: The arts give students the opportunity to learn in different ways. Which, in turn, helps teachers to see the gifts that students have. Which, in turn, begins to reshape relationships between teachers and students.

DEASY: Teachers tell us that when they see the child revealing herself or himself through and art form, they find out things about the child they didn't know before. And they then are able to respond to the child and lead the child to new levels of

achievement and performance, because they are working with that child and not just with a group.

RIGGINS: These kinds of activities promote motivation for the children. They feel successful at the kinds of things they can do.

DRIVER: We need to look at other subject areas. We need to look at instructional practices that excite and engage children. And really where the arts begin to play in.

HUCKABEE: Study after study has shown that when students are integrated into a curriculum of music, particularly at an early age, their math scores improve. Their capacity to study language improves. Their ability to think through scientific equations improves.

KATZ: We have all the rational arguments. We know what it does for school systems. We know what it does for learning in other subjects. We know what it does for learning in the arts and the use of one's senses. All of these these things are known and can be demonstrated. We know how it helps people compete in the marketplace. We know how it helps them get better SAT scores. These things are demonstrated to most people's satisfaction.

Shaping Our Future

DEASY: We have been able to demonstrate, through research, the effects that the arts have on young people. Their intellectual development, their personal development and their social development. And that research has been fundamental to helping schools prove to themselves to their publics that the arts are crucial to kids.

WILSON: It will help you be a better science teacher; it will help you be a better social studies teacher if do integrate the arts into your curriculum.

VILLANI: Make an investment in the arts. Appeal to the community, engage the community to get them to support the quality arts programs. Create partnerships with the artists in the community. Create partnerships with the other institutions in the community which value the arts.

WELBURN: Our society is mobile, not just throughout the United States, but throughout the world.

SHANKLIN: With the new economy, you need to include a business perspective. And not just people that are involved in the arts, but people who understand the global economy.

GOLDBERG: My own experience with business people is when they see what youngsters can do in the arts in schools, they are swayed by it without any question, or they want to support it.

KATZ: What the arts are about is an individual's ability to use all of his or her senses and to express themselves and communicate.

Essentials for the Future

LANDRIEU: Well, it's not possible to have a cultural economy without tremendous education from K through 12 and all the way through. That's where the work force is trained. It is where the initial seeds are planted, so that individuals that eventually work in the cultural economy actually create the economic growth that we are talking about, to learn the trade.

VILLANI: We are working with a population of students who are increasingly diverse. And arts can provide a common language for those students.

WELBURN: I think schools of the future will be, in many respects, classrooms without walls.

DEASY: We know that we are a global society now, and that we are going to see that issue both home and abroad. We know that we are a diversified population with all types of children coming into the schools. We know that there are new technological demands, there are new knowledge demands that are going to be made. The arts are a capacity to explore all of those possibilities and to make products, to invent new solutions, to in-see things in a different way,.. that's what arts is. It is an act of the imagination.

CHU: What we have is a heritage and a great advantage of being innovators, of creative people. It's a history, of course, that has changed over the years. We've got to recapture that sense of innovation, this ability to create.

GOLDBERG: Being an arts educator today can be seen as part of the future.

Critical Links

GOLDBERG: I think we need to play the political card. Deal with both the educational and political leadership in this country, to get them to understand the value of the arts.

ROBINSON: My grandson gave me a Christmas present of an oil on canvas painting, of a clown, a juggling clown. He knows I like clowns. I'll never forget that. And I think every policy maker, if they aren't a grandparent, go borrow a grandchild and have that child give you a piece of artwork that represents a proud accomplishment.

GOLDBERG: Arts are absolutely crucial to future success as both an individual and as the contributing member of society.

DRIVER: You know, if we think about what the arts mean to us as human beings, how they help us to express ourselves, and how they bring joy to our lives, they really are central to a high quality education.

KATZ: That the cultural economy, that the creative class, which bring together education and community, and economic development; these more sophisticated approaches to increasing the wealth and happiness of a society, are led by creative activities.

CHU: America, to succeed, has got to have a whole population that is able to be creative, innovative; to lead the world.

WELBURN: I say to those people who say we can afford it, that they can't afford not to do it.

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