



EDUCATIONAL<sup>SM</sup>  
THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION

SHAPING LIVES THROUGH THEATRE EDUCATION

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April 13, 2010

Dear Member of Congress:

**The Educational Theatre Association is proud to be a co-sponsor of Arts Advocacy Day 2010.**

EdTA, the professional organization for theatre education, works to ensure that theatre arts will be an essential part of every student's education. We represent over 4,870 professional members, 75,000 current student members, and over 2,000,000 alumni student members in the United States.

Research conducted in the last ten years or so—outlined in compendiums such as *Champions for Change*, *Critical Links*, and *Third Space*—has clearly articulated the impact of a school theatre experience in the academic and social skills of students. And Dr. James Catterall's 2009 twelve-year study, *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art*, confirmed that school theatre involvement can influence specific levels of achievement in college and pro-social behaviors such as volunteerism and political involvement.

Additionally, the Conference Board 2008 *Ready to Innovate* report noted that 97 percent of surveyed business executives said that involvement in drama activities develops creativity, a key twenty-first century workforce skill.

Today we advocate for the arts, and we ask members of Congress to consider in your decision making all the research confirming the value of arts education. Your support is needed for the arts in our schools and society, and for their role in developing the creativity and imagination needed for our twenty-first century workforce.

We ask you to support the following actions as described in the issue briefs that follow in this handbook:

- Appropriate \$53 million for the Arts in Education programs in the FY 2011.
- Reauthorize the Arts in Education programs of the U.S. Department of Education.
- Retain the arts in the definition of core academic subjects of learning in ESEA.
- Improve national data collection and research in arts education.
- Work to ensure that all four art forms are included in future NAEP tests and FRSS surveys.
- Conduct dedicated hearings on arts education related to reauthorization of ESEA.
- Require states to annually report on student access to all core academic subjects.
- Urge the FCC to expand Part 74 eligibility for licensing wireless microphones to include performing arts organizations and venues, educational facilities, religious institutions, and museums.

On behalf of the millions of theatre teachers, parents and students in our nation who believe that a portion of our tax dollars should be directed toward supporting our nation's cultural and educational initiatives, we encourage you to help establish a lasting legacy of the arts and humanities for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Debby Gibbs  
President

Michael J. Peitz, CAE  
Executive Director