

To Whom It May Concern:

In these uncertain times, the Arts are essential in Education. It is unfortunate that legislators measure school success with standardized tests, math, reading, and science. Though strength in these areas is important, evidence shows that standardized tests are a poor indicator of future success. Rather, research indicates that involvement in the arts produces better students who are better prepared for their careers and lead more productive and fulfilling lives (Stevenson). Even in traditionally revered careers, there is a higher demand for well-rounded students. In studies at Berkeley, indicators of whether someone would be hired for legal representation existed like "analysis and reasoning" but others included empathy and ability to develop relationships, both, habits learned in the arts (Mendoza-Denton). Dr. Roger Kneebone, a surgical professor, recently told the BBC, "...students have very high exam grades but lack tactile general knowledge. Young people need to have a more rounded education, including creative and artistic subjects, where they learn to use their hands" (Coughlan). "We have no clue what the world will look like in five years [let alone twenty] yet we're meant to be educating [today's children] for it" (Robinson). Effective arts programs don't just teach kids to play an instrument, paint, or perform in a play, they allow students to persist through failure and reach successful outcomes with ambiguity. A common value in quality arts education is teaching creativity and to utilize critical problem solving to make connections to pursue a deeper understanding of the world which we will live and work (Seidel). Art as a core subject will yield generations that are smarter, empathetic, and more skilled.

Sincerely,