

**NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE FOR  
TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE ARTS  
MAY 31<sup>ST</sup> AND JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup> 2012  
DRAFT REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

The NRTEA is a Canadian think tank or laboratory of idea makers, made up of experienced, passionate, innovative, creative and ever-learning individuals who wish to meet, discuss, share and identify possible avenues, challenges, solutions and new frontiers for teacher education, as inspiration and support to all those engaged in arts education.

Our vision is to engage, empower and inspire arts educators in both public and private sectors through new insights into pre-service and in-service training and learning in the Arts to enhance delivery of arts education across Canada.

Our mission for 2012 was to assemble professionals in the area of teacher education in the arts, to share, discuss and focus more specifically on ideal programmes and models in arts education, that participants can take away for further experimentation.

Our objectives were to:

- *Design, develop and co-create the event with all registered participants*
- *Provide a variety of whole group interaction and small group discussion and exchange*
- *Focus on essential elements of an ideal programme*
- *Work with those of similar expertise and make new connections.*
- *Explore new/alternative arts fields and experiences.*
- *Move toward a national set of principles and guidelines to envelop teacher education in the arts.*
- *Identify primary challenges to effective teacher education in the arts*
- *Provide possibilities for gaining rich insight into personal orientations.*
- *Collect and share the experiences, and statements of the 2012 event.*

In May 2011, participants had discussed and explored the current nature of pre-service and in-service teacher education in the arts. They outlined their experiences, observations, perceptions and the importance this field had for them, using reflective discussion and various art forms. They offered their views and possible avenues of explorations in this area. Their comments and suggestions were used by this year's NRTEA's steering committee to prepare this year's Roundtable. Many of the comments, insights and avenues for further investigation seemed to focus on the need to create or identify guidelines of an ideal programme for in-service and pre-service education in the arts.

For several months, the steering committee assembled a series of elements they felt were important components of an inspired in-service or pre-service programme. (Please see website [www.nrtea.ca](http://www.nrtea.ca) for the complete list). These were debated, changed, elaborated on and sent to last year's and this year's participants. A selection of the four most popular elements were kept and used as specific areas for investigation by this year's participants to the Roundtable. They were selected in order of priority as follows:

- 1- A strong philosophical base
- 2- Targeting specific arts disciplines
- 3- Knowing the teachers/educators we wish to serve through arts education
- 4- Programme strategies

## **METHODOLOGY**

Participants were assigned randomly into eight groups to discuss the three first elements on this list. For discussions surrounding *Element 4*, participants were invited to select their group according to their interests or background. Several suggestions included: teachers, administrator, consultants... All groups had reporters and all groups presented the results of their deliberations at a plenary session. Every group discussion was preceded with an artistic activity which was meant as an ice breaker or inspirational spark prior to their discussions.

Group leaders were usually steering committee members. They were asked to review the first draft of this report and it was then sent to all participants for their comments and suggestions. The final document is now posted on our website for all to consider.

The following report is a compilation and summary of comments made during the course of this two day event. The views expressed represented the 56 visions of teacher education in the arts, representing those in attendance, whose backgrounds included professors of education, arts administrators, government officials, teachers, artists and others interested, from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland and Labrador. This report was prepared by the co-chairs of the event: Madeleine Aubrey and Michael Wilson.

## **ELEMENT I – A STRONG PHILOSOPHICAL BASE**

### **DESCRIPTION**

Participants were asked to discuss questions like: What are your set of beliefs about ability, learning, knowledge and the purpose of arts education? How do these beliefs, values, past experience influence your approach to programming for Arts Education? Very often our belief system is influenced by and congruent with expectations from other groups in our society. It is important to identify where we are coming from and knowing what guiding principle or philosophical base is colouring our approach. Is there a hidden curriculum influencing our choices? Is it a pragmatic approach to arts education that sees the arts as providing employment opportunities and contributing to the

economy that should be the main focus? Or is it a behavioral, humanistic, post modern, holistic, or constructivist philosophical or psychological approach that is the basis for our practice. Should the quest for beauty or/and truth and justice be the basis for arts education and, indeed all of education?

Many of the comments from participants touched on a great many of these important philosophical considerations and approaches which they linked to several aspects of arts education.

### **PARTICIPANT RESPONSES:**

Arts education usually refers to the teaching of arts disciplines which are systematic constructs of knowledge and processes specific to or shared by all art forms. It came as no surprise that many participants talked about the importance of both the creative and critical analysis processes in all of the discussion groups. The teaching of critical analysis and the creative process are central to arts education. They provide the analysis and synthesis needed to move forward. When creative thinking is explored, the students will learn. Arts are not about the one answer or the right answer. They are not solely about product, but truly about process. When teaching students, we wonder how we support achievement. Is learning about attainment or growth? The arts are about growth, so how do we reconcile the tensions between school expectations for evaluating achievement versus communicating progress of thinking and learning in an arts process-based programme? Western culture often values performance observation of arts rather than the process of participation—hence we have the tension of experiential process vs product or experience vs. performance i.e., the way vocal music is presented on the television programme ‘Glee’.

For the francophone group, culture and the arts are almost one and the same and extremely vital to their survival. Perhaps this can also be said for all cultural groups. The arts are an integral part of human development and tightly woven into all aspects of human activity. The arts are a communication tool e.g. dance is not about “steps” but about using your body to communicate; the body is used as a voice. The arts value and are about communication-- through the arts. An artist will often ask, "What is it that I want to communicate? Communication helps us to know ourselves as well as others. Feeling is what the arts are about and through our art form we seek to connect and to communicate with others through our experiences and feelings.

Arts should be for arts sake and can also be used as a tool for expression, and examination. Why is there an emphasis on talent in the teaching of arts? The arts are for everyone. The arts should be honoured on their own; not just integrated to other subjects. It is still possible to explore cross-curricular connections. The benefit of infusing ‘arts’ with other subjects is: they add a new dimension to these subjects. There is a problem when the arts are used as an add-on, or a “wow” factor and not a fundamental knowledge component.

Arts education is a powerful exploration and experiential learning tool. Arts education promotes and fosters learning, encourages inquiry and risk taking and enables

understanding our own evolution in what we know. The arts provide opportunities for knowing, self-expression, judging, finding more than one solution, meta-cognition and a particular content/aesthetic. The arts are inquiry based curricula and focus on problem-solving. The arts encourage a way of playing and seeing things differently in order to gain understanding.

The arts create “Learning Journeys” which ask “essential questions” about life, frame learning and are key to bringing learning to life. Artists create in this way all the time, so we need to use the creative process starting with challenge/ inspiration as the window into learning rather than simply teaching discrete elements and principles of dance, drama, art, music and view that as our arts programme.

There is a social basis for arts education which ranges from the special relationship they can create for students with their school, their teachers and their peers, to how various social experiences, shape what we do. They can impact drop out rates and help marginalized students connect. They are a safe area where students feel more equal, and enjoy their experiences. Artistic exploration gives students strong voices. The arts provide connectedness to others. They are engaging and embody freedom and liberty but require students to take responsibilities. Some participants argued that the arts are necessary to our health and wellbeing and are congruent with the many lists from Health Canada on the social determinants of health (i.e. income and social status, employment and working conditions, social support, education and literacy,...), here in Canada and around the world. The time is right for the arts-- arts have often been seen only as a “fun piece” but they are actually about wellness & resiliency.

Arts education helps to build community in a small sustainable way. Community spaces that help foster and facilitate artistic expression, are important. We are concerned about social behaviour. The arts as human behaviour are both mental and physical, and a way of being in the world. As a culture, we are not reading social cues, not connected to body language, or understanding tone. The arts are all about knowing and using these skills. Collaboration and engagement are key to building a learning milieu and a community of learners. We need to consider where arts education takes place. We need to transform spaces and places such that the arts are fully embraced and act as a bridge creating community for people.

“Who should teach arts education?” is also part of this philosophical component. Participants discussed the role of the artist and the role of the educator and how they each have roles in the schools. Richer experiences for students are present when artists are involved directly with students. There was much discussion about artists and their important work in schools. Participants made the following observations and comments: the eyes of the artist are different from the teachers’; teachers must be engaged in the work with the artists; students come to understand that art and creativity sit beyond the school; environmental awareness can come through the study of works of art; artists often help with students having trouble learning; artists provide a window to where aesthetics fit within the classroom; and artists can help teachers be open to levels of learning within the classroom.

Arts education is also a political act. The political reasons for teaching the arts or having the arts in schools are very important to examine. Curriculum, if it has any point, must be useable. Participants felt that special presentations underlying the integral importance of the arts to the education of all students should be made to parents, school administrators, principals, the Ontario College of Teachers, People for Education, Ontario Literacy/Numeracy Secretariat, etc.

Despite the intrinsic free nature of the arts, there is a push to make them conform to the goals of schooling. School is structured and conformist, while the arts are often non-conformists by nature. Participants suggested that there is often a hidden curriculum influencing arts education policies. Many administrators view arts education as preparing students for the job market; or as embellished entertainment, and diversion factor for schools. Perhaps arts teachers should be encouraged to be non-conformists in their teaching approaches? Art can break down the constricting nature of traditional schooling.

Some participants felt strongly that, we needed a philosophy based on the paradigm of complexity that encompasses ethics and dignity. This is in part a response to the “global village” we now live in. One participant Mariette Th  berge, expressed it this way: "En tant que philosophie et que fondements   la formation artistique, je tiens compte de la complexit  du monde dans lequel nous vivons. Il ne s'agit donc pas d'interagir selon une vision issue du mouvement du pragmatisme qui tend essentiellement vers l'utilit , mais d'exercer mon enseignement en relation avec la singularit  de la personne, ce qui exige un rapport de soi   l'autre dans le respect  thique... Plusieurs situations exigent d'aller au-del  du curriculum et de son utilit . J'agis donc en relation du paradigme de la complexit  pour aborder des contenus artistique et les transformer. Cela ne va pas   l'encontre du mouvement du pragmatisme, mais oriente en partant le regard diff remment."

Many felt that we need an arts philosophy for everyone, for all schools, for math and science and all subjects. Schools should be creative spaces where students, with opportunities for exploring all aspects of themselves, excel in more subjects. "Beauty and moments" in the arts are key. So, how do we design opportunity throughout the learning journeys so our kids have this aesthetic way of seeing the world? Arts education provides an enriching experience that just adds to what and who we are. Arts are truly for all and we should tap into the creativity that comes from that, rather than emphasizing talent and build a community of trust. Arts education should not only be about specific training.

## **SYNTHESIS**

Experiences and knowledge shape our beliefs and behaviours, and that of others. We need to ask why are we doing this and why are we adding various components to our programme. This can help clarify our purpose and decisions. The discussion helped to identify a number of variables: areas and issues we are dealing with. There are many emotional, personal, humanistic, well being, practical, ethical, social, physical, aesthetic and

political variables to take into consideration. We must also consider, as one participant asked, 'whose philosophy are we using, that of the programme or that of the teacher?'

Over the years, arts educators have embraced many of the major philosophical schools of the past. This is evident in the summary of comments collected above from all of the groups. Our beliefs indicate that the arts are a way of knowing, a cognitive tool, an integral part of culture, a way of life, an aesthetic need, a social and personal benefit, and a political tool. It is very important to stay connected to the society we are presently living in, and to tailor our programmes to address the present situation, to meet the needs of our present society. It is also important to open the possibilities of a better way. We need to continue to believe everyone can see themselves in the arts.

Participants' comments also reflect the way curricula are and have been written in the past. A curriculum in arts education is based on one, or many philosophical premises, whether we are cognizant of it or not. By knowing what factors are impacting our philosophical approach, we can more easily exercise due diligence, take a critical approach and make changes that might better suit common goals and the welfare of our students. We must knowingly serve the needs of the students and our community. A stated vision and approach for arts education is an important component of an ideal programme.

## **ELEMENT 2 – TARGETING SPECIFIC ARTS DISCIPLINES**

### **DESCRIPTION**

This Element of discussion focused on nomenclature. How do we label what we teach in arts teacher education and what meanings do we associate with each of those labels? For example, the Western arts tradition tends to label the arts as dance, drama/theatre, music and visual arts. (Of course, there are other art forms, such as literature. But, in education categories, the traditional place of literary arts as an exclusive form is found under the general study of Language). For the purposes of this discussion, the questions asked revolved around the themes in inclusiveness – how many of the 4 separate arts disciplines are or should be included in teacher education and is there a real or implied hierarchy of importance? Is music the most important and is dance the least? In education, there are also 2 other categories often referred to as media arts and integrated arts, with varying levels and shades of meaning and emphases, in the total scope of total arts programming in teacher education.

Questions on this Element also concerned the relationship of traditional Western specialized arts and those arts currently practiced by living artists and by young people in their own lives. These have often been referred to as performance art, kinesthetic arts, sound arts, soundscapes, graffiti art, tactile arts and the like. To what extent should these current and new experiences, often outside the traditional Western categories, be considered as part of teacher education programmes? Similarly, what about preserving

traditional arts from non-western cultures, such as those of First Peoples in North America and elsewhere?

To the above questions, what are the limitations that bound teacher education and to what extent can we capture total inclusiveness?

## **PARTICIPANT RESPONSES**

### **Hierarchy**

Many suggested that there is an implied hierarchy of importance across Canada, in every aspect of the arts. Music is universally considered the most important art form for education and the others are considered in descending order of importance from visual arts, to drama/theatre and finally dance. Although, there is evidence of variation in different school boards and in some universities, this imbalance of emphasis is generally apparent. This bias mirrors North American culture generally as music has been considered both politically neutral and supported by other important institutions, such as the church. At the opposite end, dance is often given automatic censure as too much concentration on the body which Western culture wishes to bury, and the suspicion smolders that some dance forms may be sexually perverse. There exists also a general hierarchy of all subjects, both taught in school classrooms and in subject oriented teacher education settings, with literacy and numeracy bring most important, followed by the physical sciences and then the social sciences. All are ranked ahead of the arts.

In universities there exists another hierarchy. Artist colleagues, who practice their arts as a form of their research and who teach in faculties or departments of dance, drama/ theatre, music or visual arts, are considered more valuable members of the general university community than are arts educators.

Finally, there is a hierarchy of traditional skill, compared to general creativity. The “Conservatory” approach which insists on a repeatable, rigorous skill acquisition model, is considered more prestigious than that where pure technical skill appears to be subsumed to experimental or innovative approaches. Hence, ballet is more prestigious than hip-hop; European classical music is “superior” to bebop jazz; performing Shakespeare traditionally is more important than collective creations and appreciating Van Gogh is a deeper experience than Barnett Newman. There exists also the hierarchy of “live” arts compared to those involving electronic technology.

Finally, as the above hierarchy is present in Western culture generally, so it exists in schools and “the academy” of teacher education.

### **Selectivity/Inclusiveness**

Many provincial governments insist on the presence of all the arts in curriculum mandates for elementary schools. Participants felt that all elementary children should be able to experience all the arts, as part of their regular school programme. It is an issue of equity. However, since most of the arts are taught to these children by the regular

classroom teacher, the major challenge remains how that one teacher can do so. Teachers rarely have personal experience in more than one of the arts, let alone all of them. Many felt that greater effort is needed by pre-service providers, to give candidates better foundation insight into this issue, exposing them to better ranges of resources in the provisions of needed elementary experiences. The problem of hierarchy is that children tend to be exposed to the interests of the teacher regardless of where student aptitude may lie. For experienced teachers, much better Professional Development possibilities must be available, especially to fill in the gaps of teacher knowledge.

Several participants suggested that school communities can play a greater role. Parents and others of the local school family can offer richness in other cultures and in the traditional arts of all our ancestors. This model can be applied too with providers of teacher education, both pre-service and in-service. As most pre-service teacher education is provided by faculties of education, participants suggested that, although music and visual arts pedagogical courses are generally offered, drama is only exceptionally offered and dance almost not at all. To some extent, this shortcoming is necessitated by the teaching and research interests of faculty members. If there are few who express interest in drama/theatre or dance, then there is little incentive for universities to offer courses in areas of weak expertise.

Most participants concluded that all generalist teachers of elementary education must have some kind of foundation knowledge in the arts, as they must in physical science, language, social sciences and mathematics. Any pre-service or in-service education that does not provide this essential platform is simply incomplete.

### **Integrating the arts/ new designations**

The entire notion of the separateness and rigid distinctions between the arts, engendered much participant discussion. Several commented on the place of aesthetic and artistic communication, at the cultural centre of many of the world's first peoples. Here, the arts are considered not only a unity among all arts forms but also are woven intrinsically into the fabric of everyday life. Western culture needs to move more in that direction of unity. There are current initiatives to do that with ideas of imagination, creativity and innovation (ICI), leading more to the centre of organizational planning and to the enhancement of our business and scientific communities. These influences need to affect educational sectors as well, including providers of teacher education.

Many suggestions were made about aligning what we teach more closely to the current reality of art creation. Often, artists today blend and cross-fertilize traditional arts and with new electronic possibilities, creating art that is well beyond any traditional boundaries or definitions. Marketing and advertising have broken arts boundaries for many years and have used potently, the combined seduction of many arts images to sell ideas and products. The phenomenon of Apple Inc., was most often cited as an example.

One of the apparent qualities of current arts creation is the increase of creativity and the decrease of traditional apparent skill. The dance experts suggested, by example, that teacher education in dance might improve if greater emphasis was placed on "giving

voice to the body". As soon as we begin to move our bodies expressively, we are exploring dance. We can do the same in all other creative dimensions without placing so much importance on acquired skills.

The challenge to the removal of any traditional structures is how to "structure" a replacement. The term "integrated arts" is very vague and broad. This might work in smaller schools where all resources must be telescoped down. Most who advocated further explorations in this area cautioned that specific skills and orientations in particular arts are still vital, whatever is the pressure to blend the arts together. Some discussion also centered around integrated arts, meaning integrating particular arts into other subject areas. New insights can often be gained in this process that benefits both the arts area and non-arts curriculum. Some participants suggested turning around the curriculum orientation completely to suggest that creative or aesthetic problems be offered that require solutions in the arts media of student choice or preference. The same model might facilitate more embracing teacher education in the arts generally. This may get better at a kind of foundational knowledge upon which all the arts are based. It also facilitates a kind of self-learning where individuals or small groups of candidates might bring together a variety of arts modalities in the solution of particular aesthetic challenges. So, we shift the curriculum challenges from particular disciplines to those of creativity-aesthetic expectations from which solutions are found exploring the arts disciplines generally or from any expressive sources the candidates wish to explore.

The re-labeling of artistic expression might have additional benefits. One is a possible solution to the "genderization" of current labels. One of the reasons dance is so weak in school curriculum is because it is perceived as only applicable to girls. Elementary school boys are generally turned off by the label "dance". If expressive body exploration could be called something else, boys might feel less stigmatized in taking an interest. This is also somewhat true of the labels drama, visual arts and music (especially singing).

Another benefit to re-labeling is freeing cultural limitations. The term music is often associated with Western European notation and structural organization. Yet, much of the musical background of many new Canadians does not include the European foundation. These assumptions are also generally held by the other arts as they are viewed in education. A freeing of the traditional labels or the establishment of less culture grounded ones, might help make arts education more relevant to all students in schools. Similar education of teachers would help with this inclusive process.

Integration was also seen to include the inclusion of many instructors, in the provision of the arts in schools and in teacher education. Here the roles of artists were mentioned most often as examples. A key variable in assessing the completeness of arts programme could be the extent to which students are exposed to artists in the community both within schools and in the spaces where artists work, perform or are exhibited. Some university pre-service programmes support this notion with extended co-op style additional hours of experience in arts or cultural institutions to add to the pre-requisite education requirements in the arts. Specific experiences in developing a personal arts

craft can be credited and integrated into a pre-service or in-service programme. (e.g. – Queen’s ).

Perhaps, any new categories should be more fluid and more universal to be less likely to be limiting or soon obsolete.

## **SYNTHESIS**

This Element tackled the concept of inclusiveness in our teacher education programmes in the arts. Participants strongly agreed that we still have a strongly European culture in our attitudes to the arts in teacher education with music being considered the most important and dance the least. However, they sharply asserted that this bias must be broken to find a better way to offer a balance of all of the arts, including new forms currently being practiced by today’s artists and traditional arts from multiple cultures that make up our national cultural framework in the 21st century. The central challenge seemed to be how to do this within the time and resource limitations of most of our elementary pre-service programmes.

Within this Element, the general tone of discussion centered on experimentation with alternative ways of embracing the concepts of creativity and aesthetic experience in labeling the programmes we design and teach. The terms integrated arts, unified arts and arts literacy were offered as organizational tools to explore. It was strongly suggested that greater integration with local community and professional arts resources in contributing to the delivery of programmes would offer necessary enrichment and broaden the terms to include fundamental platform knowledge of all the arts.

## **ELEMENT 3 – PROFILE OF OUR CANDIDATES**

### **DESCRIPTION**

The profiles of our pre-service and in-service candidates dynamically change over time. The needs of teachers are affected by different societal pressures, organizational priorities and the shifting political agenda. The very idea of a career in teaching means something very different now than it did 15 years ago. How is any of this affected by arts education and its own dynamic? Participants engaged in spirited discussion on this Element with questions such as who teaches the arts presently in our schools? What are their demographics, social and academic backgrounds? How do we, as teacher instructors, connect with their needs better? In what variety of institutions does teacher education in the arts, take place? What are the ideal relationships between instructors and candidates in teacher education settings? In what ways have the needs, circumstances and workloads of teachers changed and how do we, as providers, adjust to those changes? Do we solicit particular kinds of ideal candidates to our programmes? What changes in responsibility have teachers experienced in their own professional development?

### **PARTICIPANT RESPONSES:**

### **Pre-service candidate profiles**

Many new candidates entering the teaching profession for the first time are older, often in their 30's, and represent a greater variety of cultural backgrounds than was the case 15 years ago. Also, the continuing trend of female majority continues among secondary as well as elementary candidates. They increasingly have other pressures in their lives, such as childcare or other employment commitments, that limit the time and effort that can be placed on their own professional education. At the secondary level, there are fewer arts specialists who choose to apply for teacher education. At the elementary level, there are almost no arts specialists seeking credentials to offer specialized arts programming to elementary students in public schools.

Candidates seem to have better electronic technology skills although many of those relate to the social media. As a result, many candidates do not seem to display as much skill in building human relationships with students as those in the past.

### **Changing climate of Current Classrooms**

Participants suggested that the multi-tasking requirements of today's teachers are much greater than 15 years ago. The overall daily challenge and stress of teaching in a public school setting is more intense than before. The relationship of teachers to principals, especially in secondary schools, has changed from the principal being the "lead" teacher to the principal as administrative and bureaucratic school CEO.

### **Altering general Orientations to Teacher Education**

There were many general suggestions for improving teacher education. Among these were bridging the gap between the idealism of university classes and the reality of the school classrooms. One example is to expose pre-service candidates to the idea of teaching being both an art and a science. Most university programmes treat teaching too much as a science only. So, such skills as flexibility and "shape shifting" need to be more emphasized.

Another major issue was the nature of practice teaching. There appears to be conscious lack of co-ordination between practice teaching placements and inadequate preparation by university programmes for those placements. A major area of improvement is to better align pre-service education between out of classroom training with in classroom experiences. The entire spectrum of mentoring as a teacher education model needs further investigation and life long development. Generally, teachers need to feel more part of a larger community to reduce the feelings of isolation. The use of social media can enhance this growth of community.

In their arts training, many pre-service candidates complain that the material is too theoretical. They would find these courses more acceptable if the content contained more practical applications.

Greater use of technology and on-line courses at the professional development level, can ease the burden of multi-tasking that teachers face in different aspects of their lives. This can be particularly helpful in the arts, where teachers can feel less threatened in learning

material, attitudes and orientations that may be outside their personal comfort zone. Teachers can also make better use of “flip cams” to better capture artifact moments for later reflection and consideration. This can be better facilitated by a mentor-collaborator model where teachers learn in pairs about the journey of their own personal professional development. Openness to new forms of artistic expression can make professional learning in the arts more meaningful personally. Many participants recommended greater partnerships between main providers of professional development course and community artists and arts organizations.

The key is providing motivation for candidates and teachers to want the arts as valuable experiences for their students. The teachers themselves need to have creative and aesthetic experiences of their own in order for them to become inspired to provide them for their students. The issue then becomes, how should those experiences be provided for candidates/teachers?

## **SYNTHESIS**

In this Element, participants attempted to identify key factors that pointed to the extent to which pre-service and in-service candidates had changed in the past 15 years. The identification of those factors could impact on the adjustment or re-design of our programmes. Participants concluded that pre-service candidates were generally older females with increasingly divergent prior experience profiles and corresponding less specific expertise in any of the commonly accepted arts. As their lives are increasingly segmented in a multitude of demands, the pure time and energy available for engagement in our programmes has become diminished. This observation was paralleled with increasing pressure and complexity imposed on working teachers, with corresponding less time and energy available for any kind of professional development. In addition, the increasing cultural and ethnic diversity of most inner city classrooms, challenges all assumptions about orientation to teaching and learning and to foundations of all curriculum development, organization and resource inclusion.

The main suggestion for appropriate programme adjustment included greater practical and less theoretical experiences, more direct arts experiences with candidates with corresponding reflection of the art as well as the science of teaching and a closer liaison with associate or mentor teachers. At the professional development or in-service level, the major additional area of investigation was the mentor or coaching model (for more details, consult the Ottawa Carleton District School Board – [www.ocdsb.ca](http://www.ocdsb.ca)). Here, individual teachers are paired for mutual learning opportunities over a period of time. Greater use of electronic technology and on-line communication can aid teachers who face multi-tasking challenges on a constant basis.

Finally, comments were made about appropriate pre-requisites for pre-service elementary programmes. Some suggested a return to the mandatory Ontario regulation of Grade 8 Conservatory Piano qualifications for all Kindergarten candidates. Others

suggested that all elementary candidates should have at least one university course in the arts, or equivalent. Some added that greater weight should be placed on arts experience in candidate experience profiles as part of the admission process. All of this area requires further thought with a focused rationale why any additional pre-requisites would in fact improve the quality of candidates in the arts.

## **ELEMENT 4 – PROGRAMME STRATEGIES**

### **DESCRIPTION**

When assembling a programme for either in-service or pre-service training in the arts, it is important to consider the following: how the course is structured (e.g., number of hours; number of arts taught; timetabling); what delivery models are used (e.g. combined on-line and face to face); who will teach the courses; what venues are used and what community resources will be tapped into. Would we be well served by having something like a 'Craigslist' or 'e-Bay' type site approach of mentors for arts teachers? In addition to these considerations, we need to think about: evaluation and certification.

Here are some of the results of discussions from the various groups of participants. Their suggestions were concerned with: certification; structure of the programme; coaches and mentors; community connections; integration; technology; and advocacy.

### **PARTICIPANTS RESPONSES**

#### **Certification**

Certification was by far the most popular topic of the discussion around programme strategies of an ideal programme. By certification participants meant official accreditation given upon completion of training. There are well established certification procedures at the pre-service training because most of these fall under the jurisdictions of universities. However, shrinking budgets, lack of accredited staff and larger candidate numbers in classrooms, are now creating a problem for these institutions. One possible solution to the shortage of staff would be that the arts, in faculties of education, be jointly taught by professors of the education and arts faculties/departments.

This year, participants were preoccupied by certification at the in-service level and felt that it not only needed to be regulated by well established standards but that certification needed to be made available through a variety of delivery models. Participants felt that not only traditional courses should be considered as accreditation for certification, but experience should be recognized as well. This experience can be: participation in associations, organization of artistic events, concerts given, art exhibits produced, play and dance productions, film and television production. Some felt a special arts educator accreditation be considered for an artist who wishes to become a teacher in our present education system.

Participants from Ontario suggested when modifying or creating new Additional Qualifying (AQ) courses or discussing certification, arts subject associations along with artist collectives should be invited to participate in these discussions. There is a very

timely opportunity now for members of the artistic educational community in Ontario to redefine what teacher arts education is. The new provincial arts curriculum that was released in 2009 means that the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) is providing direction to the Faculties about how to support it. They are the pipeline to teachers in the arts. The arts are not a single voice and all voices must be heard. The Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE), regular participants of such review boards, must ensure all the arts are part of all pre-service programmes, not just music or visual art. If only existing professors are invited to the table, there will be inequity because most faculties do not have tenured dance and drama professors.

We do not need more providers for teacher certification. All provinces have their respective regulatory agencies. It is however important to have consistency in the programme being offered and standards. We must also have the courage to declare to some candidates, that they are just not appropriate for the teaching profession, especially in the arts.

Another issue for teachers related to certification is accessibility to courses. Many teachers are located in regions not served by a university programme. This represents more expense and travel time. For the Francophone community, there is the added problem that even if they are located in an area where there are courses, often these will be cancelled if there are not enough candidates for the course. Very often francophone teachers need to follow their courses in English.

Although not much was said about programmes and certification for early childhood education in the arts, one participant felt that, more attention should be directed to individuals and courses for those involved in early learning. Certification and quality education and learning are extremely important for this age group.

### **Structure**

Certification is tightly tied to the discussion around the organization and structure of the programme. There are many models of teacher training at the pre-service level in arts education, in different provinces. Two provinces essentially have an “arts specialized pre-service” arts education course. Saskatchewan has an excellent programme for training students in arts education. It is a 5 years programme that offers 2 degrees for those working in the elementary and secondary levels. Quebec offers a 4 year programme. Pre-service training in education faculties in Ontario focuses on all subjects over an 8 month programme. A new suggestion is to extend the programme to 10 months. Many felt it was not necessarily more time that was needed, but more about what you do with the time. There should also be a more significant class experience-apprenticeship in whatever model is followed. A co-op programme in which candidates could start earning a salary, was suggested. There should be follow-up possibilities so student teachers can have experience beyond Teacher’s College. There are generally more females than males in these classes. How do we modify delivery models to take this into account?

Time and again participants expressed the wish that AQ courses, or the equivalent, be reviewed. The present structure and model of AQ courses in Ontario is not the same

across the province nor is it as relevant and practical to many teachers today. Many teachers can not afford to take the time to follow these courses or be able to go to where these courses are given. It would be important to break the present three course model down into modules (perhaps 24: 8 modules per course). Some modules could be taken over a weekend, on line, in the summer or throughout the course of the year. Specific modules could be offered by universities, colleges, associations or through a certified mentor on a one on one basis. The whole programme could be delivered through, an online component, face to face interaction, studio workshop and independent research. Most importantly there should be standardization regarding course content and benchmarks across the province. More certification can have an affect on promotion within a board of education. In Ontario, in-service certification can have a direct affect on pay scales. This is an incentive for teachers.

### **Coaches and Associate Teachers**

Who will teach in-service art courses? Many suggested that along with established university faculties, colleges and subject associations we could also draw on arts coaches and associate teachers. Today, many boards of education are investing in creating coaching positions in several areas for their teaching staff. The importance of an instructional coach doing workshops assure: teaching of skills, allows for networking and re-assures teachers they are not alone. Learning is both equal and shared by both presenters and participants. Some programmes use a cluster approach in schools where candidate/teachers work in one specific arts area creating a “co-operating teachers” group.

Many suggested that in pre-service training, students be sent out into the schools early in the programme: with a total of as much as 50% time in schools. However, effectiveness in schools depends on the “master teacher/associate teacher”. How many associate teachers are qualified to receive students and offer them good mentorship in arts education? This is easier at the high school level and a particular challenge in elementary schools. For university pre-service programmes, finding appropriate placements for candidates is key. In Quebec, CEGEP students, who may want to apply to teacher education, can use experienced mentor students at McGill. Sometimes graduates students are asked to return to pre-service classes to inform and coach the current students.

Associate teachers who train student teachers could take a summer course on mentorship; this would allow the teachers who take on mentoring to obtain certification. In Ontario, this is already possible through an OCT sanctioned in-service qualification. They could also be paid to mentor student teachers. Associate teachers should be invited to the university to speak about class and time management, and their practices and experiences integrating of arts into their classrooms. Awareness of arts subject associations like CODE, CMEA, CSEA and provincial affiliates, can help both associate teachers and regular teachers.

## **Community Connections**

School-community connections are essential. We need to link to learning outside the classroom. Part of successful 21<sup>st</sup> century learning is: offering experiential learning; creating atelier opportunities outside of the school in the arts community; creating porous boundaries to the classroom; and building sustainable relationship between the school and the community, both inside and outside the school walls. Schools need to re-conceive their structures and supports (e.g. resource teachers, school resource teams, and teaching artist rosters) to open a space for the arts community in the school and provide a place for the artist to bring his/her best work in. School culture needs to address how deep and meaningful arts experiences can be sustained from grade to grade, rather than relying on the one champion teacher to provide one class with these experiences and then possibly never again, or at least not consistently.

A “Craigslist” or “E-bay” type of site approach to mentors for arts teachers would be an excellent addition to our resources and can draw on community mentors. Pre-service teachers coming from the world of the arts may already have extremely varied backgrounds. Student teachers need an “arts rich” experience in the schools as well as other opportunities to interact with children and arts in the community. They will need a variety of mentors to satisfy their requirements and easy access to these mentors. For non-arts teachers, we need to model artist-teacher collaboration early on in the training process. The merits of concurrent vs. consecutive training in arts education for Ontario were debated by one group in terms of access to a broader community of mentors, more time to reflect, and more time to develop in a core discipline / subject area while also developing your “teaching chops.”

Community connections are a good way to ensure that student/teachers have creative/aesthetic experiences outside of the regular classroom. There are models that were highlighted like: the Artist in the Community placements at Queen’s (3 weeks of practicum could be in an arts-based placement other than a school); At UBC: Cohorts are organized in themes/focus; and the open space – “Community Arts” at Concordia, where all are welcome to come and work together in Arts-making.

## **Integration**

We must all think about curriculum more astutely, making links for integration provided by the transfer of important thinking and application skills developed through the arts, to all other subject areas. Not only should the arts education professors be demonstrating how the arts can be integrated into the school curriculum but other faculty professors that teach math or science should also be encouraged to modify their examples showing how the arts can be integrated into their subjects. Professors need to be conversant in all subject areas in order to integrate.

## **Technology**

Technology can play a role in connecting expertise to areas where there may not presently be any and build capacity in those places where it is absent. The power of collaboration via technology to co-learn and co-reflect on a process of discovery through the arts, is great. Teachers are coming into schools where students are locked

into a technology of handheld devices. It appears that technology is beginning to close down interaction which is such a fundamental part of the arts, particularly drama and dance. How do we bring the two worlds of creativity and technology together to inspire and extend learning? It is possible for us to see technology as a space of possibility rather than a threat to creativity. Let us address the importance of trying to disengage students from technological lethargy. Certain types of technology can be isolating. We need to recognize the opportunities and the benefits of technology. It is a tool not a solution! It can be used as a motivator and a medium for creation.

### **Advocacy**

How and why are we still trying to justify the significance of arts education in our schools, school boards, institutions etc? Change is hard when public advocacy for the arts is so weak. Expounding on the value of the arts in education would not only motivate teachers but help garner much needed support from the public. A advocacy strategy for the arts in teacher education is an essential component of any programme.

We might further our work with new teachers, administrators and system leaders by dialoguing and exploring how the arts make learning (thinking) visible and why they are 'the difference that make the difference' in our educational spaces and places of learning: "...the remarkable feature of the evidence is that the biggest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their own teaching, and when students become their own teachers.... Thus it is visible teaching and learning by teachers and students that makes the difference."

John Hattie, *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement*, (Routledge, NY, 2009)

What is the factor that will make the difference in our teacher education programmes regarding the arts and in our schools, institutions and systems? Through inquiry (in Ontario) we are hoping to raise student achievement in numeracy and literacy--the very nature of the arts is inquiry and yet we do not link it explicitly to this process. We need to inform the Literacy & Numeracy Secretariat (Ontario) that they need to continue to connect the arts in the work of schools and districts, in light of student engagement and achievement. Principals especially need to hear that the arts are part of the learning and development skills that support literacy and numeracy.

"Inquiry is an approach to learning whereby educators and/or students find and use a variety of sources of information and ideas to increase their understanding of a problem, topic or issue of importance. It requires more than simply answering questions or getting a right answer. It espouses investigation, exploration, search, quest, research, pursuit and study. It is enhanced by involvement with a community of learners, each learning from the other in social interaction." (*Guided Inquiry: Learning in the 21st Century* p.2 Carol C. Kuhlthau, Leslie K. Maniotes, Ann K. Caspari, Libraries Unlimited, 2007)

"This quote, at least for me", said one participant, "has the arts 'written all over it'". Artists engage in this process all the time as they strive to create their own works- (composers, visual artists, media artists, dancers, play-wrights). So, to help generalist

teachers with embracing their ability to 'do the arts' in the contexts of learning and to help system leaders to see the 'value' of the arts, we could facilitate their understanding by presenting the arts as the underpinning of an inquiry approach, not an aside to the inquiries they are doing in science, or social studies. CILM (collaborative inquiry into learning in Mathematics, an Ontario Ministry of Ed initiative) is promoted as a powerful vehicle for enhancing mathematics achievement. The CILM process is actually very reminiscent of the stages of the Creative Process. If we can show this connection more explicitly, perhaps 'powers that be' will understand the interdisciplinary nature of thinking and creating as experienced through and in the arts.

## **SYNTHESIS**

When creating an ideal pre-service and in-service arts education programme, special attention is needed to establish the rules and regulations needed for certification. The process of establishing the criteria needs to be done by all those who are knowledgeable about the area. The structures for delivery of the programme need to be flexible and address the needs and expectations of the participant student /teacher/candidate. Many models have been suggested throughout this section on 'strategies'. The discussion on coaches and associate teachers is very relevant to the programme and its structure because it facilitates the delivery of the programme. Our knowledge of mentorship and what is needed has evolved over the years, and many boards of education have invested time and energy into finding ways to support their teaching staff that is very relevant to arts education.

Wherever a programme is given, it is important to tap into the artistic community, near and far. This not only enriches the programme but helps build capacity by creating a network and continuity. If we are concerned about the wellness of our arts as they currently exist in our schools and institutions, then we need to rethink our current views of the spaces/ places of learning, spaces/ structures in organizations/ institutions. We need to transform these spaces and places such that the arts are fully embraced and act as a bridge to/ through learning, thinking, beauty and possibility.

Technology is ever changing and is a very important tool for arts education. It can sometime be isolating but it can also bring people together. The key is to use it and through our creative and critical skills draw on all the potential it can offer us in our programming.

An important strategy to use is advocacy. We need to communicate what we do, demonstrate its relevance and the benefits it brings to teacher/candidates. As some participants have stated, we need a national focused advocacy strategy for the arts in teacher education

Many other suggestions were made that are pertinent. Although evaluation did not feature much in the discussion, one group suggested that formative evaluation should not be lost in all this talk of certification. Others suggested that we not forget play as a learning mode. Some were preoccupied by the terminology used and urged us to try to

use the same language at all levels from k-university when discussing the arts. Classroom management and the reality of chaos vs structure, is always a challenge for new teachers. Associate teachers and coaches are a great asset in this area.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this report we have presented and synthesized the comments and thoughts of the 46 participants who participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Roundtable of teacher education in the arts. Although four separate elements were developed and presented for discussion, it was evident in the responses that these elements sometime overlapped. The editors tried to separate as best they could participants' comments in order to give a clearer and more elaborate description of each element. They also tried to steer the synthesis of each summary of comments back to the goal of the Roundtable which was to describe four important elements of an ideal programme for arts education for both pre-service and in-service. To the extent possible the following are some conclusions we have drawn from the rich and varied responses of all discussions.

### **Philosophy:**

An ideal programme for pre-service or in-service will have a philosophical basis embedded in its vision and in specific components of the programme. Being aware and understanding our beliefs in art education helps us to plan and focus on the results we are seeking. It also provides transparency and informs the candidates taking the courses. Identifying the philosophical basis is not an easy task. As participants discovered, it was through their expression of their values, beliefs and practices that their philosophical approach is made evident. Comments from participants confirmed that over the years a large number of philosophical schools have had an impact on arts education and continue to do so. As a result arts education has progressed and become richer. It is also important to remember that arts education (and all education) is very much influenced and driven by social circumstances and political policies and ideology. Furthermore as one participant said, "Ultimately, it is the teachers' philosophy that really matters. Do arts change society? – no, teachers (people) do."

### **Arts Forms:**

An enlightened programme for pre-service or in-service today should include teaching of the following arts forms - a balanced inclusiveness of all forms of artistic exploration and expression; an increased focus on foundational knowledge, insight and skill that is common to all the arts; an equilibrium of learning IN the arts, OF the arts, THROUGH the arts.

### **Candidate Profiles:**

The candidates today are increasingly multi-dimensional in age, life engagement, culture and ethnicity, and employment commitment. The implication for teacher education is greater assurance of personal aesthetic experience, practical training and a possible adjustment in pre-service elementary pre-requisites.

### Programme Strategies:

An ideal programme today for pre-service or in-service today should include strategies that deal with certification, structure and models of delivery. Certification is becoming a very important issue as many participants pointed out. There are many ways to acquire knowledge and skills making it necessary to develop flexible modes of delivery of programmes and to establish standards, criteria for acquiring official certification. In the same way course structures need to take account present social circumstances and emerging technologies. Programme strategies also need to address the use of integration, community resources and technology, and deal effectively with advocacy. It is important to advocate for and draw attention to the value and necessity of an arts education at both the pre-service and in-service level. This will encourage, motivate and support student teachers and teachers. Relevant and progressive programme strategies will also assure the sustainability of this rich individual and collective resource which is arts education.

The totality of this report and the summation of the entire Roundtable 2012, has led us to conclude that there are four foundational considerations to consider in evaluating and considering changes to all programmes of teacher education in the arts. These considerations are Philosophy, Discipline Inclusiveness, Candidate Profile and Programme Strategies. Although the names of these elements remain the same over time, the environment and the historical moment we are living in have a great impact on how they are dealt with. The conclusions reached point to an increasing interdependence between these variables and to a need for an ongoing search for enrichment, relevance, imagination and congruence within each.

It is left to future endeavors to explore all these key components in the quest to offer and present the finest, most effective and inspiring programmes possible for teacher education in the arts. Our collective educational horizons depend on this evolving vision form all of us.

### **Future Questions to Consider:**

- 1. Are there philosophical approaches to specifically reflect upon in thinking about the arts in teacher education?**
- 2. What are the common foundations that all arts exploration and expression share?**
- 3. Are there unique teaching qualities required of teacher educators of the arts? If so, what are they?**
- 4. Are there essential programme strategies for all arts courses in teacher education? If so, what are they?**