



RATIONALE FROM STUDENT LEADERS

(Created by members of the Junior Arts Education Leadership Team)

When we imagine a future where the latest technology, newest scientific advances, and most innovative products and ideas are developed in Alabama, we know that we need more than the best experts in every field. Alabama needs creative thinkers. This state is host to gulf trade, NASA, some of the best football teams in the country, and a budding creative community. There is no doubt that Alabama is more spectacular than we are given credit for, but there are still areas in which we are falling behind. In order for our students to graduate high school prepared for college, and graduate college prepared to join the workforce, we need to supply them with arts education.

Students who are provided arts education will graduate with a better grasp of creative problem solving. The value of integrating career tech and design work has been proven, and we can see this in companies such as Google and Apple. The study of art has the power to teach creative thinking skills required in math, science, chemistry, history, ethics, and an array of other practices. When the arts support a student's grasp of the importance of different fields of study, that student will enter the university more excited to learn.

Arts education has the impeccable ability to draw excitement from students, allowing them a means of expressing themselves that is unmatched. Students who are in a healthy emotional state perform better in school and many facets of day-to-day life. Some learners will not excel in math, reading, or science. As these students struggle for a chance to excel, they may never experience the joy

that comes with success. Arts education has the ability to reach that self-doubting student and help that student gain confidence. Self-confidence is essential to college readiness and to an industrious workforce. And self-esteem is taught best through arts education.

It is not only in the classroom that we witness the benefit of the arts. In the midst of this Information Age, when students are often criticized for being obsessively attached to technology, providing opportunities for them to sit in a concert hall, a theater, a museum, or around a sculpture has the power to stir and awaken their senses to a reality that is not virtual. Art has a way of reconnecting digital natives to their humanity.

People do not have to choose to be artists or scientists, readers or dancers, or mathematicians or musicians. Some of Alabama's favorite moments are comprised of a balance from both. What is a football game without a marching band? What is a home without a child's masterpiece decorating the refrigerator? We are not asking you to choose arts education over other curriculum or initiatives. We are asking you to include support for arts education to prepare creative students for the future of our state. As students graduate with minds that are exercised in creative thinking, they will find a new home in Alabama as innovators and business owners. You have the ability to give students the resources to find answers previous generations may have lacked. We are the generation that made "YouTuber" a job title. Just imagine the jobs we can create and the communities we can bring to life with your help.

Education is the key to preparing future leaders for the responsibilities they must hold. Embedding arts education into our school curriculum will develop these leaders at an early age and give them the confidence they will need to pursue any career they choose. A balanced education will lead to success for Alabama's students and our state as a whole. To see Alabama become a more vibrant and enriched state, we ask that you invest in the arts and allow the creative community to make you proud.