

12-18-2000

## Correspondence from U.S. Department of Education

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### Recommended Citation

Kleinwaks, Lorraine and Teaching + Learning in Art + Design, Department of, "Correspondence from U.S. Department of Education" (2000). *Documents*. 10.  
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202- \_\_\_\_\_

December 18, 2000

Dr. Paul A. C. Sproll  
Center for the Advancement of Art & Design Education  
Rhode Island School of Design  
Two College Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Dr. Sproll,

Although Sandra Newkirk was your program officer, I have had the opportunity to read the final report for your FIPSE project P116B50625, "Project New Directions." You are to be commended for developing the first statewide professional development program and curriculum framework based on learning outcomes for K-12 arts education reform.

I found your discussion of the intended and unintended collaborative partnerships established as a result of the project to be thought-provoking and candid. While these new relationships and your FIPSE project have set the stage for future initiatives of the relatively new Center for the Advancement of Art and Design Education, you recognize that there are many challenges ahead to actually changing how kids are taught and infused the values of the arts in K-12 classrooms.

I want to thank your evaluator, Junius Eddy, for her guidance to FIPSE regarding evaluation budgets. It was clear from the quality, care, and passion of the evaluation commentary that the evaluation of this project became a "labor of love." You may know that FIPSE is in the process of soliciting advice on revisions to the FY 2002 Comprehensive Program. I will share with the FIPSE staff these thoughtful comments about the size of evaluation budgets, in light of what FIPSE wants to accomplish in providing hard data on the impact of FIPSE projects on learning outcomes.

I could not help but think that perhaps the greatest stumbling block to demonstrating the real impact of your project in the classroom is that no significant change was made in the area of student assessment. Two areas that seem to offer strong promise are portfolio assessment and using real world problem-solving strategies. Yet teachers reported no real progress in using these strategies for assessing student learning. Teachers also reported that they do not see themselves as impacting parents,

administrators, or school boards. If they became armed with evidence of an impact of the new curriculum strategies on learning, such as the role of journals on improving early student writing or portfolios having some role in the college admissions process, I wonder to what extent this picture might change?

Challenges aside, congratulations on successfully implementing all of the activities of your grant. The Department will officially close the grant and send the file to the Federal Records Center for Archives.

As the Center continues to mature and new initiatives unfold, please keep us informed of the impact of your project both in your state and elsewhere.

Sincerely,



Lorraine Kleinwaks  
FIPSE Program Officer