

Subject: Opposition to House Bill 1172

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Annette Marchand, and I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 1172. As a dedicated educator at NDCDE since 2006, where I teach both Art and Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) classes, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative shift our organization has made from a print-based course structure to a robust online learning environment. This transition has empowered us to offer between 300-400 courses annually, significantly enhancing educational access for North Dakota students.

NDCDE is dedicated to aligning with the needs of schools and addressing the teacher shortage in North Dakota. I am committed to offering a diverse range of art classes, including Digital Photography, Basic Drawing, Beginning Painting, 2D Studio Art, and Digital Art and Design. I strongly advocate for the integration of Competency-Based Education, which enhances the learning experience and fosters student engagement. My focus is on building meaningful relationships with my students and providing personalized experiences through consistent feedback and open communication. In conclusion, the partnerships we cultivate with schools to create structured learning environments lead to remarkable outcomes for our students. I am deeply grateful for the collaboration of Learning Coaches and parents alike.

The Importance of Online Art Education:

Learning art online plays a crucial role in 21st-century education, equipping students with essential skills and competencies necessary for success in today's rapidly evolving world. Here are several ways in which online art education aligns with these principles:

1. Access to Diverse Resources:
 - o Global Learning: Online platforms enable students to explore various artistic techniques and styles from around the globe, broadening their perspectives.
 - o Variety of Materials: Virtual tutorials allow students to experiment with diverse media and tools, unhindered by the limitations of physical classroom resources.
2. Development of Digital Literacy:
 - o Technology Skills: Engaging with online art platforms enhances proficiency in digital tools and applications, which are increasingly vital in numerous fields.
 - o Online Collaboration: Students learn to collaborate effectively through digital platforms, enhancing their ability to work with others remotely.
3. Personalized Learning Experiences:
 - o Self-Paced Learning: Online art classes accommodate different learning styles and preferences by allowing students to progress at their own pace.
 - o Tailored Feedback: Personalized feedback can be provided through online critiques and discussions, fostering artistic growth.
4. Enhancing Creativity and Innovation:
 - o Flexible Exploration: Online art education encourages unique creative exploration, fostering innovative thinking and problem-solving skills.
 - o Project-Based Learning: Many online art programs incorporate project-based learning, prompting students to develop original ideas and solutions.
5. Interdisciplinary Connections:
 - o Integration with Other Subjects: Online art education often intersects with history, science, and technology, allowing students to see connections across disciplines.

- Cultural Awareness: Exposure to various cultural contexts enhances students' understanding of the global community.
- 6. Communication and Collaboration:
 - Virtual Communities: Online art education fosters virtual communities where students can share ideas, provide feedback, and collaborate on projects.
 - Presentation Skills: Students learn to present their work digitally, honing their ability to communicate effectively in diverse formats.
- 7. Fostering Lifelong Learning:
 - Continuous Access: Online learning encourages students to pursue art and creativity throughout their lives.
 - Adaptability: Learning in an online environment prepares students for the flexibility required in modern workplaces.

Conclusion:

Online art education not only promotes access to diverse resources but also develops digital literacy, offers personalized learning experiences, enhances creativity, fosters interdisciplinary connections, and encourages collaboration. These essential elements equip students with the skills needed to thrive in an interconnected and rapidly changing world, making online art education a valuable component of contemporary learning.

Moreover, we are currently facing a mental health crisis in North Dakota, exacerbated by limited access to learning opportunities. Many families are at a significant financial disadvantage, and denying funding for art education could severely restrict their access to a well-rounded education. Research consistently shows that art positively impacts both learning and mental health by enhancing cognitive skills, reducing stress, promoting self-expression, and improving social interactions. Encouraging participation in the arts not only enriches the educational experience but also contributes to better mental health outcomes.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this important matter. I urge you to oppose House Bill 1172 to ensure that our students continue to have access to the invaluable benefits of online art education.

Sincerely,
Annette Marchand

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