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National Advocates for Arts Education
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Review of *The Australian Curriculum: The Arts*

The National Advocates for Arts Education (NAAE) strongly urges the review panel to enable the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* to be implemented in its present form, allowing processes of refinement to be managed by classroom teachers. It is a living document that can be refined by expert arts educators as it unfolds across the country.

We note that the review panel will 'evaluate the robustness, independence and balance of the Australian Curriculum, examining the content and development process'.

The NAAE (with representation from five arts forms) has supported the development of the arts curriculum and its central principle of the *entitlement of every young Australian* to an arts education, one that includes all five artforms – dance, drama, media arts, music and the visual arts.

An arts curriculum that is constituted of five separate subjects is complex, and we applaud the consultation process over a long period undertaken by ACARA with expert educators and industry stakeholders.

During the development of the curriculum ACARA has consulted with generalist primary and subject specialist secondary teachers, arts practitioners, professional associations and all state and territory education authorities. Each of the NAAE art form associations has also been instrumental in assisting with reviews, submissions, public awareness campaigns and political advocacy to ensure that Australia has one of the most comprehensive national Arts curriculums possible.

We note that matters of implementation remain the jurisdiction of the states and territories, and were pleased when Ministers endorsed the curriculum in the middle of last year, and committed to its implementation.

We also continue to strongly support the cross-curriculum priorities:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
- Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
- Sustainability.

These priorities have particular resonance in an Arts curriculum where engagement with Indigenous and Asian cultures is essential for Australians to understand ourselves and our place in the world. Sustainability of Australian arts practice will contribute to all students' cultural learning through their engagement with practising artists and industry leaders.

Support for the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* is internationally recognised in this extract from the [*International Arts Education Standards: Survey of the Arts Education Standards and Practices of Fifteen Countries and Regions*](#), prepared by the New York-based College Board for the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards:

"The Australian arts curriculum could be considered as exemplary in the breadth of its scope, the considerable attention to defining its own language, and the lengths it goes to in recognising the differences in abilities and learning opportunities at the different age/grade levels. It considers the importance of the arts in the roles they may play in other parts of the general curriculum: literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, cross-cultural and environmental awareness, social and ethical development. Uniquely among the countries studied, it provides a link for a comprehensive documentation and explanation of the research that informs the curriculum."

We think there is little to be gained from unnecessarily starting a long consultation process all over again when there has already been long and successful engagement with the curriculum shaping and writing processes by all arts education stakeholders in Australia.

We look forward to your positive response to our call for immediate online publication and implementation of *The Australian Curriculum: The Arts* in its current form, and to our continued engagement with ACARA's clearly established processes of Shaping > Writing > Implementation > Monitoring > Evaluation.

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