

**Submission  
No 13**

**INQUIRY INTO THE MUSIC AND ARTS ECONOMY IN  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

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Submission to:

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6 – PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT**

**The music and arts economy in New South Wales**

With reference to-

*(b) policies that could support a diverse and vibrant music and arts culture across New South Wales,*

*(c) policies that could support the establishment and sustainability of permanent and temporary venue spaces for music and for the arts*

As a primary school teacher with 40 years' experience I welcome this enquiry into Music and Arts in New South Wales.

I have witnessed firsthand the degradation of arts programs in schools where a crowded curriculum with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy moves 'extra-curricular' studies into the background.

However many noteworthy studies have shown that Creative and Practical Arts subjects are a vital part of a well-rounded education. They develop confidence, concentration, self-esteem, perseverance and teamwork. Arts learning gives motivation for non-academic students to shine; it is inclusive of differing learning styles and levels of ability.

Many primary teachers lack the confidence to teach arts subjects ~~fall~~ due to the absence of training or skills in these areas. Teachers who themselves were not given the opportunity during their schooling to develop a passion for the arts. Teachers who's training at university can be based on as little as a one day workshop.

Why is it that NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has produced new curriculums for "academic" subjects but none for the Creative and Practical Arts?

My submission to the government to address the issue of the lack of arts programs in schools would be to

- raise the profile and importance of arts subjects in primary schools
- create programs where core subjects can be taught through the arts
- provide high quality pre-service teacher training in arts subjects and regular professional development
- appoint trained itinerant specialist arts teachers or industry specialists that could work within a cluster of schools to provide and implement programs and training and support to teachers.
- subsidise performing arts incursions into schools

In addition to my Department of Education teaching experience I am the director of a highly successful junior musical society JAM- Junior Albatross Musical launching into its second year providing performing opportunities for more than 60 children between 10 and 15 years old. Our

policy is to provide this experience for every student who applies at little cost to them (a joining fee of \$10.00 and a t shirt).

However the cost of hiring suitable venues for performance is crippling, causing us to charge exorbitant ticket price just to cover hire costs. We know that some families were unable to attend performances due to expensive tickets. Financial support for students in our group similar to those recently announced for assistance with sports club registrations could overcome these difficulties. A government grant or subsidy to community groups for the use of these facilities would be an excellent contribution to encouraging the development of the arts in our communities.

Julia Armstrong