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No Art Teacher Left Behind: Professional Development that Really Matters in an Age of Accountability

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Teacher professional development is a chief concern of states, districts, and schools in the wake of high-stakes accountability measures such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The goals and practices of professional development are often disconnected, and this misalignment affects art teachers in unique ways. Art teachers are often "left behind," without the opportunity for content-specific professional development experiences. This article presents the thesis that effective professional development must be content-specific and continuous and bear out authentic connections among purpose, content, and evaluation. Both NCLB and the National Art Education Association (NAEA) have established goals and standards for quality professional development for art teachers. This article synthesizes these standards and describes current gaps in practice. Finally, the article presents a model of art teacher professional development that meets at the nexus of artist, teacher, and community and addresses these gaps in practice. These aspects of professional development, if explored, practiced, and rigorously evaluated, can establish a culture of quality professional development for art teachers.

Keywords: art teacher professional development, artist teacher, inservice programs, No Child Left Behind, university and public school collaboration

Professional development for teachers is a chief concern of states, school districts, and administrators as they aim to meet federal accountability measures such as the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, commonly known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Even though this legislation is almost a decade old and has been decried by educators, parents, and students alike, one cannot deny that it firmly established a culture of high-stakes accountability that concerns art educators in unique ways (Beveridge 2010; Chapman 2005; Grey 2010; Sabol 2013; Sabol 2010a; Sabol 2010b). Art teachers are on the frontlines of this movement, striving to prepare their students for success. But who equips the teachers to succeed in this task? What is the best way to equip them? What assures them that they, in the wake of the demands to be accountable, will not be "left behind"? If the goal of professional development experiences is to prepare teachers to help students achieve success in every classroom and subject (U.S. Department of Education 2009; Sabol 2010b), why do many professional development experiences for art educators focus on math, science, and reading strategies (Balsley 2013)? Why are the arts exempt from the content that is part of the accountability landscape? While art educators no doubt can learn from non-art inservices and improve their interdisciplinary curriculum skills, they are not being trained in their core area. The arts are rich in natural interdisciplinary connections, so training teachers in the arts is one of the most direct routes to creating this type of curriculum (Taylor et al. 2006).

THE (BROKEN) LINK BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

NCLB and the current surge of competitive government education grants (such as Race to the Top, discussed later in this article) present the concept that supporting teachers through quality professional development is the most direct link to student success (U.S. Department of Education 2010). States receive federal funding to provide these professional

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development experiences. The content and the means of delivery of these experiences are often decided at the state and district levels. Oftentimes, they are designed, led, and/or assessed by individuals or groups that don't know the teachers or the ethos of the district or the school (Darling-Hammond 2001; Flint, Zisook, and Fisher 2011). In many cases, the professional development is not delivering the intended outcomes of the law. In a frank assessment of state and local implementation of NCLB, the U.S. Department of Education's (2009) report on professional development for teachers concludes:

> While NCLB defines the types of activities that professional development should include, its definition leaves room for interpretation. If one interprets the definition to include activities with at least some focus on content, at least one characteristic of active learning or coherence, and at least one experience that is longer than a one-day workshop, then most teachers are receiving professional development consistent with the law's specifications. On the other hand, if professional development means participating in multiple sustained, active, coherent learning experiences that extensively focus on content, then most teachers were not receiving the type of professional development promoted by the law. There does appear to have been some improvements in teachers' professional development experiences in 2003–04 and 2005–06, but there is still a long way to go.

The overall assessment of professional development experiences led by states and local agencies is curiously similar to assessments of the effect of NCLB on pre-K–12 art education programs. In a survey of 3,000 art educators, Sabol (2010a) found that 72 percent of them believed that NCLB provided no benefits to their art programs (179). In fact, a common complaint among art teachers is that NCLB has decreased instructional time for the arts and moved arts to the margin of the school curriculum (Beveridge 2010; Grey 2010; Sabol 2013).

Similarly, Sabol (2013) cites research that proves that professional development for arts teachers is becoming increasingly less focused on the arts. Providing high-quality, arts-focused professional development and increasing student success in the art classroom should be the primary goals of current education reform movements—goals that can be linked together in a dynamic model of professional development.

In this article, I assert that those who design professional development for art teachers should understand the standards and goals of professional development as outlined by NCLB and the National Art Education Association (NAEA). Moreover, they should seek alignment of the purpose, content, and assessment of the arts-focused professional development experiences they design. I describe a professional development program that I developed that demonstrates this alignment. Finally, I contend that the principles of this program hold promise for all entities wishing to deliver transformative professional development experiences for art teachers.

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF ART TEACHERS

In 2006, I was hired as a professor and art education coordinator at Texas Christian University (TCU) in Fort Worth, Texas. One of the core values that the program supports is that the art teacher is first and foremost an artist. To this end, nearly 70 percent of the BFA degree in art education is composed of art classes (art education, art history, and studio art). Much of this content knowledge is "road tested" by art education majors in local art classrooms during required fieldwork placements. What I quickly found as I began meeting art teachers and placing students with them for observation and teaching was that there was an alignment between the outcomes of the TCU art education program and the desires (but not necessarily the practice) of the art teachers. Art teachers began approaching me and requesting professional development. They told me outright that their chief desire for professional development was to have the opportunity to create art. For many of them, this necessary activity is often pushed to the side amidst demands from work and family (Allison 2010). When teachers attend to developing their artistic identity, their confidence and competence in the classroom increases (Thornton 2011). Since arriving at TCU and meeting new art teachers every semester, I had repeatedly heard this same story of the struggle to persist in personal art-making. I realized that art teachers experience stress in their schools as a result of accountability measures and a lack of understanding among faculty and administration about the role of the art teacher in school accountability. Sabol (2010a) explains that the art teacher is often marginalized, "required to provide supplemental instruction in subject areas outside art education . . . [and] provide remedial instruction and test preparation instruction for students in subjects not included in the visual arts or in which they are not licensed" (202). Sabol (2010a) continues:

> It is incorrect uses of their time and talents to prepare instructional materials, lessons, and instruction in subjects being tested in other disciplines. It is equally objectionable and unfair to students needing this support to have it provided by art educators who may not be trained or qualified to provide it. It must be asked how these abuses serve the needs of the students and how do they promote learning in the visual arts? (202)

A highly qualified art teacher is the primary means of promoting learning in the visual arts. This is the same argument used for promoting learning in the core subjects. Sabol (2010a) draws this comparison as he makes the case for the necessity of promoting schoolwide understanding of the role and needs of the art teacher:

> Art educators must be treated with the same levels of respect and professionalism as educators in other disciplines. . . . If art education is to be placed at the core of education

> in schools, then art educators must be treated in the identical manner as educators who teach in the traditional areas included in the core. They must be allowed to utilize their knowledge, skills, training, and motivation in concentrating their full efforts on providing art education for their students. (202–03)

The most direct route to helping art teachers use their knowledge, skills, and training in the visual arts is providing professional development that is focused on their artistic development. After all of these musings and experiences, I saw the potential for a great synergy: our undergraduate program had the philosophical and practical underpinnings that would meet the needs of art teachers and increase student success in the art classroom and beyond.

DEVELOPING AN ARTS-FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

In 2008, I was contracted by a local school district to design three years of professional development for art teachers in Title I schools in the district as part of a U.S. Department of Education discretionary grant entitled Professional Development for Arts Education. This grant program seeks to support the development of models that help teachers meet the needs of K–12 students in high-poverty schools. This is a focus of many federal education reform initiatives, including Race to the Top, a $4 million competitive grant open to all states, districts, and schools. Race to the Top grantees must demonstrate that they are addressing four key areas of education reform, including professional development. They must also demonstrate that all four areas are in-line with the culture and needs of the participants. The specific grant for which I was contracted stipulated that the model should be aligned with current educational research in the content area and should help fortify the public school art curriculum by helping teachers reinforce art education standards in their classrooms.

I was aware at the outset that the professional development I designed had to acknowledge and address my earlier realizations that art teachers need the opportunity to create art and attend to their individual artistic development. This would enable them to help students in their classrooms achieve artistic success. Furthermore, developing teachers' skills as artists would also help them plan rigorous interdisciplinary curricula. I had heard the following comments all too often at previous art teacher professional development experiences: "This is a waste of time." "How am I supposed to apply all of this?" When am I ever going to use this in my classroom?" Such comments, which are repeated in similar scenarios across the country (Penuel et al. 2007), were at the forefront of my mind as I designed this three-year cycle of professional development for art teachers.

The purpose, content, and assessment of the three-year program had to be aligned in order for the program to be successful. The program also had to make explicit the connection between the professionals' dual role as teacher and artist. Most notably, the program needed to be supported by standards for the professional development of art teachers.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR ART EDUCATORS

Both NCLB (U.S. Department of Education 2009) and the NAEA (National Art Education Association [NAEA] 2009) have similar professional development standards that reinforce that quality professional development can and should engender student success. What is the content of such professional development under NCLB and NAEA? How do other national education standards for professional development compare to those of NCLB? NCLB underscores several characteristics of high-quality professional development. Such professional development:

- increases teachers' content knowledge of the subject they teach;
- allows for active learning (i.e., is related to real-life classroom situations) and is classroom-focused;
- correlates to other learning activities; and
- occurs over a span of time (U.S. Department of Education 2009).

In 2009, the NAEA published *Professional Standards for Visual Arts Educators*. This document explores eight standards that are linked to high-quality art instruction. Each standard is aligned with those of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs (NCATE). Quality professional development as defined by NAEA:

- encourages teachers to reflect on self and practice;
- encourages teachers to clearly articulate their teaching philosophies;
- helps teachers to link current art education research to classroom practice;
- shows teachers how to accurately document their teaching progress; and
- creates mentors.

THE GAPS BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

The standards of NCLB and NAEA are well aligned in their goals to support the success of students through professional development that is content-driven, successive, and linked to actual classroom practice. Are these standards linked to

professional development in practice? How can a closer look at the dilemmas of art teachers in the current high-stakes accountability environment inform the structure and content of professional development experiences?

The effects of high-stakes accountability measures, as well as the current NAEA and NCLB standards for quality professional development, should provide insight into the types of professional development activities that are needed to help art teachers achieve success.

It is important here to note one distinction between NAEA's (2009) standards and those of NCLB (U.S. Department of Education 2009). NCLB fails to include any goals that are linked to the dispositions, beliefs, or actions of the individual teacher. Where is he or she positioned in this race toward student success and school reform? Is the teacher merely a technician (Chapman 2005; Klein 2008), or is he or she the authority in the classroom who designs transformative learning experiences?

This apparent disconnect between NCLB (1999) standards and NAEA (2009) standards can result in an identity crisis for art teachers. This alone can produce stress. But when placed in the context of the high stakes of NCLB, the stress compounds and has a significant impact on art teachers. Consider Sabol's (2010a) valuation:

> Because visual arts learning is not examined on the high stakes tests utilized by states for measuring students' achievements under the provision of NCLB, art education is viewed by many as a discipline of lesser importance in the school curriculum.. .. As a result, art education programming and art educators continue to function at the periphery in public schools. (5)

Not only did NCLB place art educators and their work in a compromised position, it also created a climate of uncertainty and resentment. Sabol (2010b) again elucidates this situation: "[Art teachers] contended that NCLB disrupted the educational flow of schools and the process of education in unacceptable and unprecedented ways. They felt that the psychological atmosphere in their schools was less nurturing, less focused on children and their development, and more focused on test scores" (186).

Art teacher stress is correlated with lower instructional effectiveness (Evans-Palmer 2010). Perhaps this is due to the fact that when teacher performance in the classroom is gauged by behaviors that can be readily observed and bubbled in, the teacher becomes no more than a technician (Evans-Palmer 2010; Klein 2008). This changes the teacher's notion of self, his or her role, and his or her work. The notions of the art teacher as a leader (Klein 2008) and as a change agent (Fullan, 1993) who possesses self-efficacy (Evans-Palmer 2010) and is able to solve any educational dilemma (Allison 2008) are obliterated. Therefore, a successful professional development program must address and lower stress in teachers by helping them to reflect on themselves, their roles, and their identity as teachers.

The classroom, school, and district all have distinct cultures, or ways of thinking and behaving. Charland (2011) notes that this culture can only be changed by professional development that enables teachers to reconceptualize their roles. Is this type of change occurring in schools as a result of NCLB's professional development? Most answers to this question are either ambivalent (U.S. Department of Education 2009) or negative (Chapman 2005; Sabol 2010a; Sabol 2010b). The professional development provider must be aware of the existing cultures and take them into account in devising a professional development plan. Failing to do so may result in superficial changes that do not last (Charland 2011). If the aim of educational reform is to change schools from the inside out (Senge 2000), then professional development should enable teachers to create and operate within a new system. Ideally, this system would position teachers as mentors to one another, ultimately allowing for enculturation, or the widespread acceptance of values and norms in a community. Becoming a mentor or being mentored is an indicator of high-quality professional development for art teachers (NAEA 1999).

Furthermore, these cultural sites are complex and can present a variety of dilemmas to teachers: lack of administrative, community, and parent support; lack of funding; students of varying backgrounds; and unpreparedness to teach these students, to name only a few. These factors, too, produce stress. In tandem with reducing teacher stress, professional development should equip teachers for dilemmas in general. NAEA's *Standards for Art Teacher Preparation* (1999) notes that professional development should help art teachers reflect on both self and practice. As they are given the time and space to do this, their self-efficacy increases and they trust their power to change situations (Allison 2008; Bandura 1994; Evans-Palmer 2010; Hickman 2010; Klein 2008; Thornton 2011).

To the teacher with a robust sense of self-efficacy, these changes begin in the classroom. As teachers begin to see themselves as competent professionals, they will use their pedagogical skills to allow their students to see themselves as dynamic learners, going beyond "the test" to become critical thinkers, with the essential content knowledge serving as tools aiding in their development (Flint, Zisook, and Fisher 2011). All professional development standards and models agree in this regard: there must be an explicit connection between the content of the professional development and the teacher's classroom practice (Charland 2011; NAEA 2009; Sabol 2010a).

One of the most sobering critiques of NCLB and other standardized forms of assessment is that they erode the climate of inquiry in the classroom (Klein 2008). Thus, the notions of the teacher as a scientist, alchemist, artist, inventor, engineer, and leader are all abandoned. Chapman (2005) further clarifies this point: "Nothing in NCLB supports

TABLE 1
Standards and Goals for High-Quality Professional Development

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)	National Art Education Association (NAEA)*	Topics Not Addressed in Current Standards
Increases teachers' content knowledge of the subject they teach	Encourages teachers to reflect on both self and practice	Reducing teacher stress
Occurs over a span of time	Encourages teachers to clearly articulate their teaching philosophies	Recognizing the culture of the school
Allows for active learning (i.e., learning related to real-life classroom situations)	Helps teachers link current art education research to classroom practice	Enabling teachers to solve educational dilemmas
Is classroom-focused	Shows teachers how to accurately document their teaching progress	Connecting the content of the professional development to the teacher's classroom
Correlates with other learning activities	Creates mentors	Creating a community of practice among teachers
		Helping teachers see the connection between their work as teachers and their work as artists

Notes: This table is compiled from NCLB's definition of high-quality professional development (U.S. Department of Education 2009), NAEA's *Professional Standards for Visual Arts Educators* (2009), and the author's observations and research (Allison 2010). *NAEA standards are aligned with those of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs (NCATE).

teaching or teacher preparation from critically informed and artful perspectives. Traditions of teaching and learning in the visual arts are, in the main, contrary to the prevailing ethos of national policy" (14). If we assert that the classroom should be a place where democracy is taught, then it must be modeled. There must be provisions made for multiple voices and solutions.

The idea of the teacher as an artist resonates most deeply with me. Art is a form of inquiry that comes very naturally for many art teachers. We create art in order to explore ideas and to understand, solidify, and even question truths. Many of the practices of artists enable this inquiry: the ability to take risks and to be comfortable with ambiguity (Klein 2008) and the allowance for open-endedness (Evans-Palmer 2010) and divergent thinking (Eisner 1991; Hickman 2010). Therefore, a professional development model should allow teachers to create art and to link the act of creating art to the act of teaching. Said differently, art teachers should be enabled to see how their work as artists coincides and synthesizes with their work as teachers.

TYING IT ALL TOGETHER: A MODEL FOR ART TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The professional development model I designed and implemented for the school district incorporated the standards for high-quality professional development as defined by both NCLB and NAEA (1999). It also included components derived from the gaps between the standards and actual practice in the field (see Table 1). Most importantly, the model demonstrates the alignment of purpose, content, and assessment (see Table 2).

For three consecutive summers, fifty art teachers from Title I schools came to the School of Art at TCU for one week to work with a professional artist and a professional art educator (see Table 2). Each summer, the workshops were open to art teachers in Title I Schools on a first-come, first served basis. As a result, some teachers had the benefit of participating for all three summers, and some may have only participated in one or two summer experiences. As the designer of these experiences, I sought to blend theory and practice. I wanted each of the three summer experiences to have a dual purpose: developing teachers' artistic skills and integrating these skills into their pedagogy. During the first summer workshop in 2009, art teachers created ceramic work with artist and professor Chris Powell and visited museums and learned art criticism techniques with Dr. Terry Barrett. Art teachers were reflexive during the week, using the art criticism techniques to help them discuss their ceramic work and their knowledge of ceramics to help them discuss the works in the museums (see Figure 1). Most importantly, art teachers spent time practicing various writing and art criticism activities—strategies they could use in their classrooms—with one another.

The second summer workshop, held in 2010, helped art teachers to identify and relieve work-related stressors so that they could then address the needs of at-risk students in their classrooms. Art therapist Jane Avila helped teachers apply certain principles of art therapy that helped teachers to relax, such as guided imagery and focus-oriented art production (e.g., mandalas and spontaneous painting; see Figure 2). She also helped participants understand how to become therapeutic teachers who recognize student distress and use art materials and processes to address these issues. Professor and artist Susan Harrington spent time with art teachers in the afternoons, allowing them to create art on a much larger scale than any of them had ever done before (see Figures 3, 4, and 5). Susan Harrington's method of formative feedback helped the teachers to feel cared for as she noticed and identified outright the subtle changes in their artwork.

The final summer workshop held in 2011 sought to firmly establish each teacher's identity as an artist by providing

TABLE 2
University Art Education Professional Development Model for Inservice Art Teachers

	Year/Program			
	2009: "Make, Talk, Think, Look, Play"	2010: "Art Making YOU Making Art"	2010: Monthly Mentoring Meetings	2011: "Making, Thinking, and Then Making Some More"
Description	Professor Chris Powell led ceramic sessions for teachers in the morning; Dr. Terry Barrett led art criticism sessions for teachers in the afternoon at local art museums.	Art therapist Jane Avila led sessions in the morning; Professor Susan Harrington led mixed-media sessions in the afternoon.	Five art teachers were selected from the 2010 workshop. In fall 2010, we met the last Friday of each month for four hours. Each session was led by art therapist Jane Avila and co-facilitated by Amanda Allison.	Professor and sculptor Cam Schoepp and artist Greg Ruppe led teachers in an array of sculptural processes such as casting. Dr. Amanda Allison discussed classroom implications with teachers.
Purpose/Goals	Blend theory and practice by engaging in art criticism with Dr. Terry Barrett at local museums and then creating ceramic works with Professor Chris Powell; use the art criticism methods to discuss and critique their works; discuss how to use the methods in the classroom; experiment with these methods in a group.	Recognize stressors in the teachers' job; make a plan to reduce these stressors; recognize the needs of at-risk students; understand how therapeutic art instruction can meet these needs.	Identify one or more job-related stressors or dilemmas; identify personal strengths; create art that helps teachers inquire into and solve these dilemmas; build a cadre of support.	Learn a variety of sculptural processes that teachers would not usually experience; embrace their identity as artists by looking at contemporary art in each session, sketching a variety of ideas, and making work that is concept-driven; discuss with an art education mentor how their artistic development will impact their work of teaching in their classrooms.
Assessment	Participants responded to the following prompts: What I learned about teaching, what I will take back to the classroom, what I learned about life, what I learned about myself.	Participants completed a pre- and postsession questionnaire that asked them to describe their identity as teachers and artists, as well as identify and explore ways to relieve stressors.	Participants completed a pre- and postsession questionnaire that asked them to identify a specific stress or dilemma, propose ways of solving this dilemma, and identify how they used art in this process. They were also asked how their classroom practice would be different after this experience.	Participants answered informal questions during studio time about the connections between their artistic development and their classroom practice.
Conclusions	Teachers discovered multiple ways to help students inquire about works of art; rekindled their art-making abilities; became more connected to other art teachers; recognized things that were preventing them from enjoying the art-making process; and understood student frustrations better and made a plan to address them.	Teachers saw their identities as artists being valued; were given tools to solve educational dilemmas; were given the ability to persist as artists through concentrated studio time and individual attention from instructors; liked that the instructors affirmed the things that they were doing "right"; became more connected to their community of art teachers; and took time to nurture the self and saw the critical nature of this need.	Teachers changed their perception of the self; saw themselves as stronger and more efficacious; solved their stated dilemma; became part of a community of teachers; and expressed the desire to continue making art.	Teachers understood more about the nature of sculpture; developed new ways of teaching three-dimensional art to their students; saw themselves as artists; experimented with new and unconventional materials; and understood more about contemporary art and how to introduce it in the classroom.

Notes: Each workshop (with the exception of the monthly mentoring meetings) occurred for one week, Monday through Friday, for six hours each day. There were two identical weeklong sessions during each summer. Twenty-five art teachers participated in the first week, and twenty-five different art teachers participated in the second week. There was a gallery show of the teachers' work at the end of each week.

opportunities to work in several unconventional sculptural materials and with processes such as casting and latex molds with professor and artist Cam Schoepp and artist Greg Ruppe (see Figure 6). The artists led engaging discussions about contemporary art and encouraged the teachers to expand their ideas about the nature of art-making. They truly privileged the artist identities of the teachers by allowing them to ask "Why?" "What if?" and "Why not?" I led teachers in informal discussions about how their artistic identity would impact their work in the classroom. Each of the three summer experiences ended with a gallery show of the teachers' works.

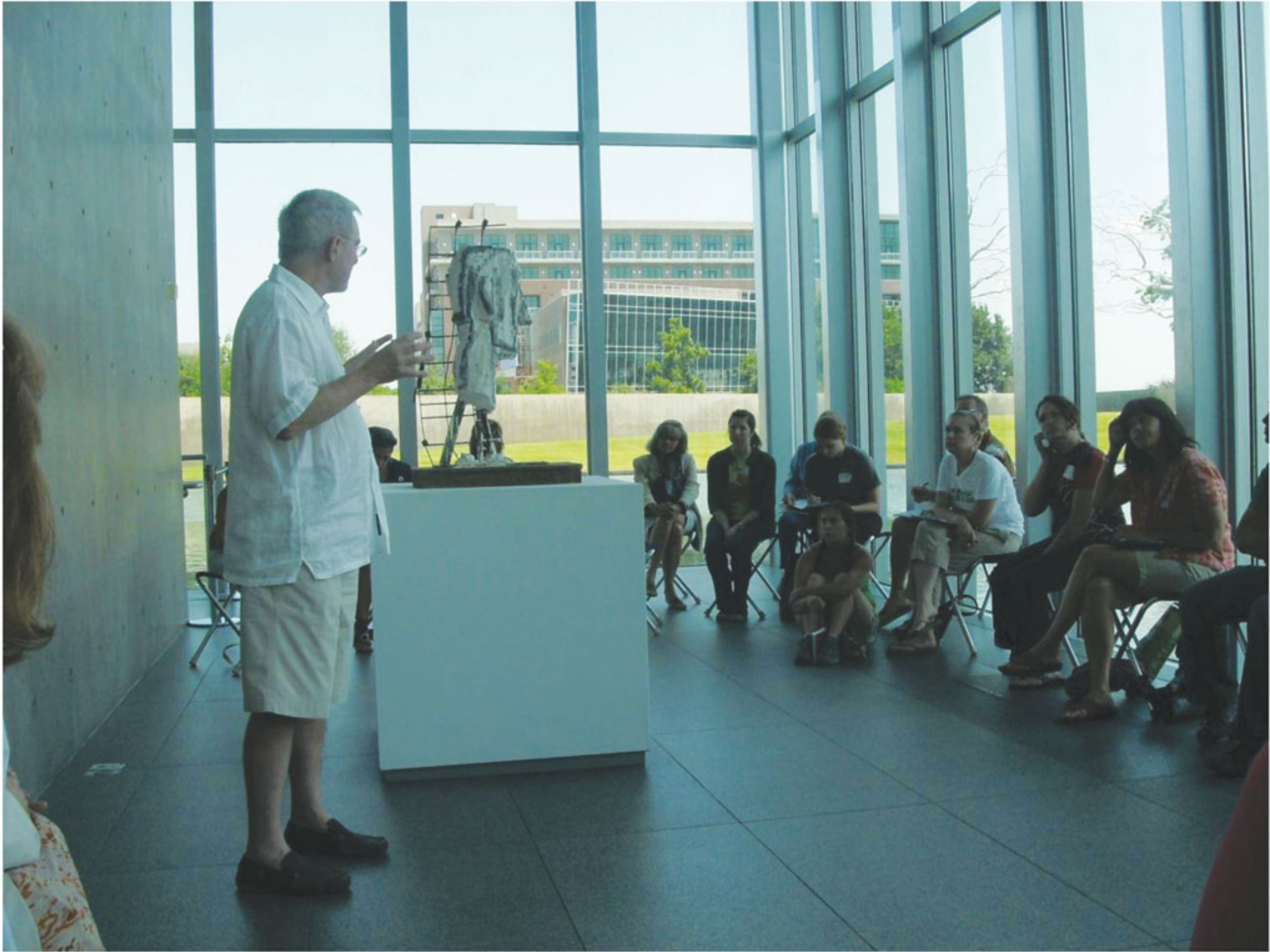

FIGURE 1 Dr. Terry Barrett leads art teachers in discussing a work of art at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth: David Bates, *Male Head IV*, 1995; plaster, metal, and wood; 39 × 12 3/4 × 23 3/4 inches. Collection of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, gift of the artist (color figure available online).

During the implementation of these workshops, I was able to synthesize all my earlier research and intentions. Through a research grant provided by TCU,[1] I was able to formally study the outcomes of the summer workshops (Allison 2010). This resulted in a number of principles that can be examined and used by providers of professional development experiences for art teachers.

PRINCIPLES LEARNED FROM THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Use Already-Established Connections

The university art education program I coordinate works very closely with the district whose teachers were part of the grant. Beginning in 2006, I coordinated a series of professional development activities for art teachers in the district, and I attended a large number of district art shows, local professional conferences, and art teacher inservices and meetings in an attempt to get to know as many of the 150 art teachers in the district as I could. I did this because I wanted to understand the culture—the ethos—of the district in an effort to offer the most effective professional development opportunities. When I was offered the grant contract in 2008, it made sense to design professional development experiences for the district that I knew the best. Charland (2011) notes that understanding and responding to the school and district cultures is the only way to produce lasting change in teachers and schools. Inquiring into the culture had a related benefit for me as an art teacher educator: I was more equipped to create a goodness of fit between art teachers and my art education majors, who are required to complete observations and student teaching in local art classrooms. This relationship reinforced a major goal of the art education program at TCU: to help preservice art teachers understand the "ever changing needs of art educators in the field" (Sabol 2010a, 199) by giving them access to a cadre of teachers involved

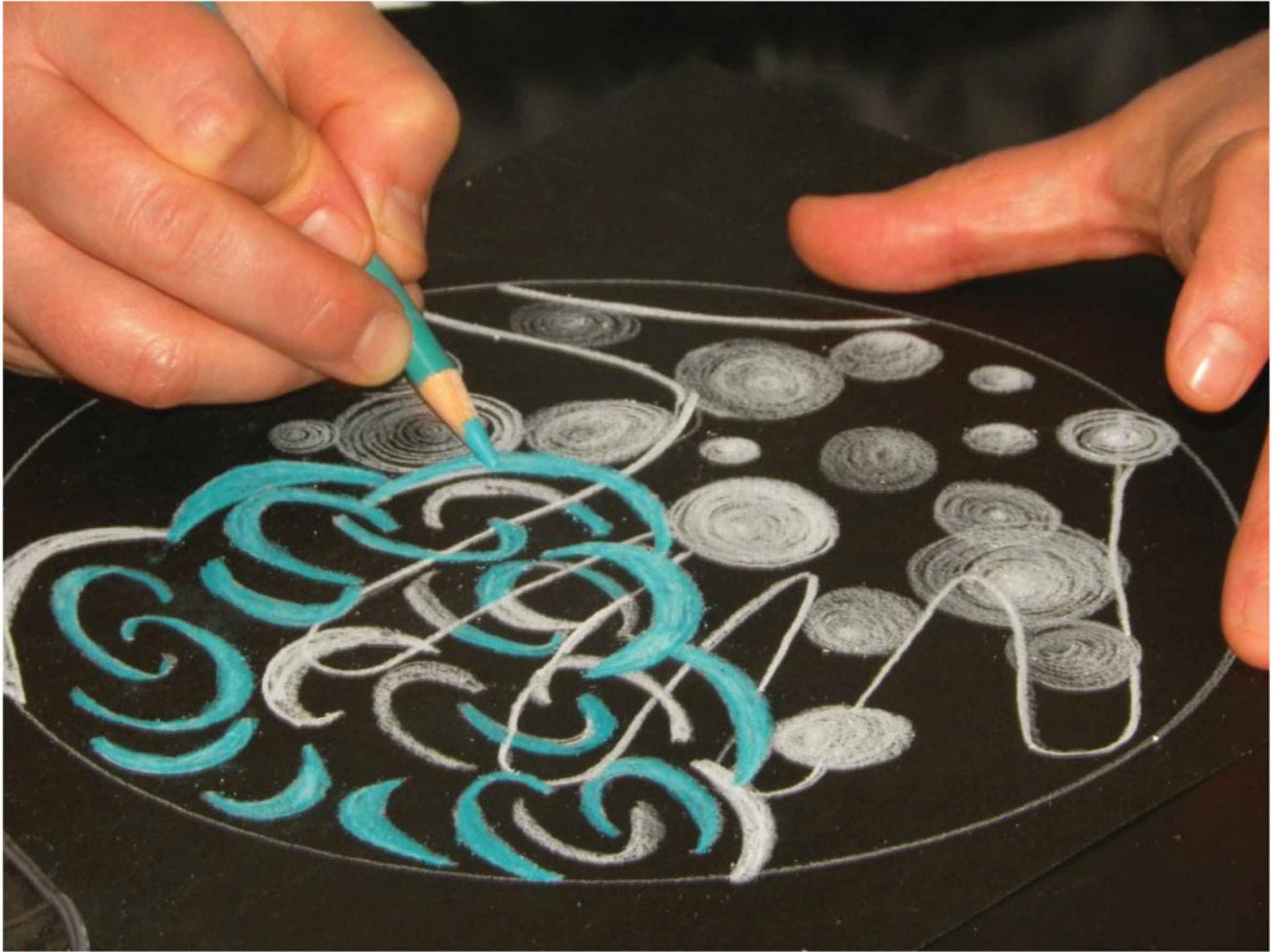

FIGURE 2 Art teachers create mandalas as a tool for relaxation (color figure available online).

in professional development at TCU. This strong relationship between the district and the university made the design of a professional development experience very natural. The model allowed for an authentic collaboration between a cadre of art teachers and a university that grants degrees in art education. This collaboration is supported by NCLB, insofar as the legislation aims to:

> support systematic education reform by entering into contracts or cooperative agreements with eligible entities, including state educational agencies, local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, museums or other cultural institutions.. .. [Such partnership can lead to] the development of model inservice professional development programs for arts educators and other instructional staff. (U.S. Department of Education 2002, Title IX, Subpart 15, Section 5551 [A, C])

Privilege Teachers' Identities as Artists and Educators

Teaching is indeed a form of artistry. Designing learning experiences that are substantive and transformative is an intentional act, akin to creating a painting. When teaching is viewed as artistry, one's agency as a teacher is honored: teachers realize that they are able to design empowering learning experiences. They can adapt curricula to meet all students' needs. They can design experiences that produce outcomes that are of import to them, outcomes that align with their true beliefs about teaching. There is open-endedness in the visual arts whereby a dialogue occurs between the work and the artist. In this conversation, one discovers new possibilities. The "work" (used as a verb) of art remakes you (e.g., Booth 2001). This idea was first introduced in the writings of John Dewey (1958) and is now being revisited in the field of art education (Allison 2008; Hickman 2010; Thornton 2011). Eisner makes the case in his book *The Enlightened Eye* (1991) that work in the arts provides a distinct body of knowledge that is set apart from traditional forms of inquiry. The work of a painter, for instance, can inform one's ability to see, to look deeper into other situations. As Allison (2008) notes, "Thus, making and looking at art can enhance ones' perception. Sullivan's thesis in *Art Practice as Research* (2005) is that the work of artists is as rigorous as the work of scientists. He further explains that the work of making art is socially

FIGURE 3 Art teachers were able to work on a larger scale than their classrooms or homes allowed (color figure available online).

conscious and has the potential of transforming oppressive situations" (152).

Therefore, it became essential for me in each summer workshop to create a physical and emotional space for art teachers in which they were able to function as visual artists and thus understand more about the artistry of their teaching. This aim took the form of giving them large areas to work by themselves or collaboratively and by holding debriefing sessions at the end of each day that allowed them to articulate the connection between their artist and their teaching selves.

Combat Teachers' Low Morale by Allowing Them to Attend to the Self

Sabol (2010a) has noted that art educators frequently do not have any input into the decision-making process about the nature or content of assessment of their students or themselves. This lack of control over situations that affect their working conditions can have a negative impact on morale and perceived competency. One way to combat this reality is to design professional development opportunities that allow art teachers to attend to the self by creating a space where they can openly talk about and brainstorm solutions to the educational and personal dilemmas they face in the wake of assessments and reform. There is a cogent dynamic between teacher credibility and awareness of and attentiveness to the self (Klein 2008). Professional development experiences can be fortified by successfully integrating these two domains. An example of how I sought to implement this principle occurred in our 2010 workshop, led by art therapist Jane Avila and painter Susan Harrington. In the morning sessions, art teachers talked about work stressors and participated in therapeutically-oriented art-making led by Jane Avila. In the afternoon sessions, teachers created large-scale mixed media artwork under the direction of Susan Harrington. In debriefing sessions at the end of the day, teachers indicated that they realized how their stress was reduced by creating art. They further remarked that their students' stress could also be reduced by creating art. The teachers as a whole concluded that they would help reduce stress in their students by returning to art-making practices such as risk-taking, focusing on process versus product, and using new materials and approaches. It

FIGURE 4 Art teachers worked side by side and offered advice to one another on the development of each other's work (color figure available online).

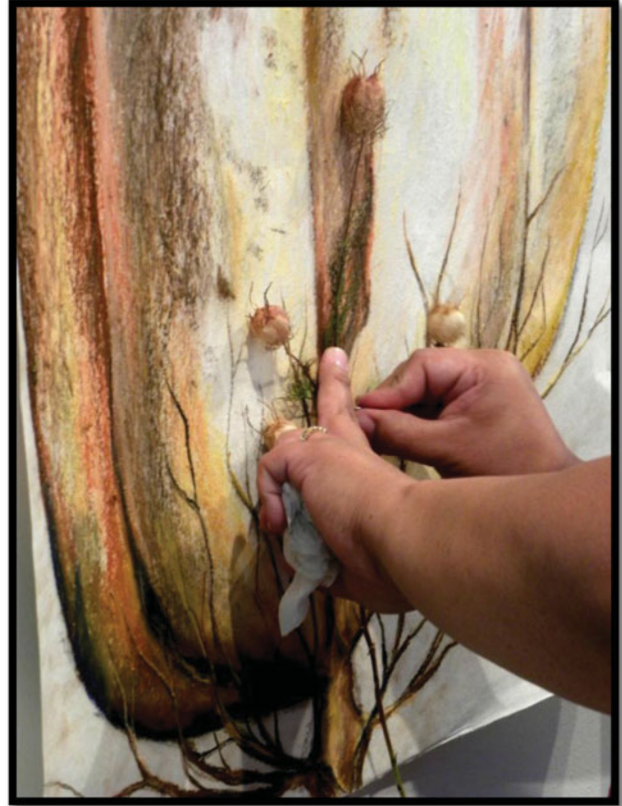

FIGURE 5 Art teachers used mixed media in their large-scale works (color figure available online).

was clear from these responses that many art teachers had "standardized" their curriculum in the wake of the standardized assessment movement and had left behind many of the things that make art a unique, valuable, and viable core subject. Art teachers can and must advocate for arts-focused professional development (Balsley 2013; Beveridge 2010; Grey 2010; Sabol 2013) so that they can eliminate some of their workplace-related stresses.

Maintain Contact with Participants After the Experience Ends

NCLB is explicit in its assertion that high-quality professional development does not consist of one-day workshops and other singular experiences. The most effective and lasting professional development will create communities of practice (Flint, Zisook, and Fisher 2011) in which teachers work alongside and support one another. Mentoring relationships develop naturally in a professional development setting in which teachers feel valued for their identity as both artists and art teachers. At the conclusion of the workshop, an infrastructure should be in place that allows such relationships to be sustained. At the conclusion of the 2010 summer workshop, I interviewed the participants and selected five teachers for a focus group with whom I could maintain contact after the workshop ended. This group of five art educators attended a semester-long series of monthly mentoring meetings held at the university each Friday. As part of the experience, each educator developed an action plan for identifying and meeting their own workplace-related needs and the needs of selected students in their classrooms that particular semester. The following year, these teachers, of their own accord, became mentors to other teachers in their district and to art education majors at the university. In this model, the benefits of continued contact with professional development participants can often yield results that are exponential, reaching a wider array of populations and achieving a synergistic range of results that would not have been possible with a one-time experience.

The grant program ended in 2011. There are many indicators that the program was successful at meeting its intended goals of developing teachers' artistic skills, decreasing their stress, and impacting their leadership and teaching skills. All of these outcomes correlate with student success in the classroom (Flint, Zisook, and Fisher 2011; U.S. Department of Education 2010).

Since the conclusion of the workshop, two of the participating teachers have been awarded the district's highest

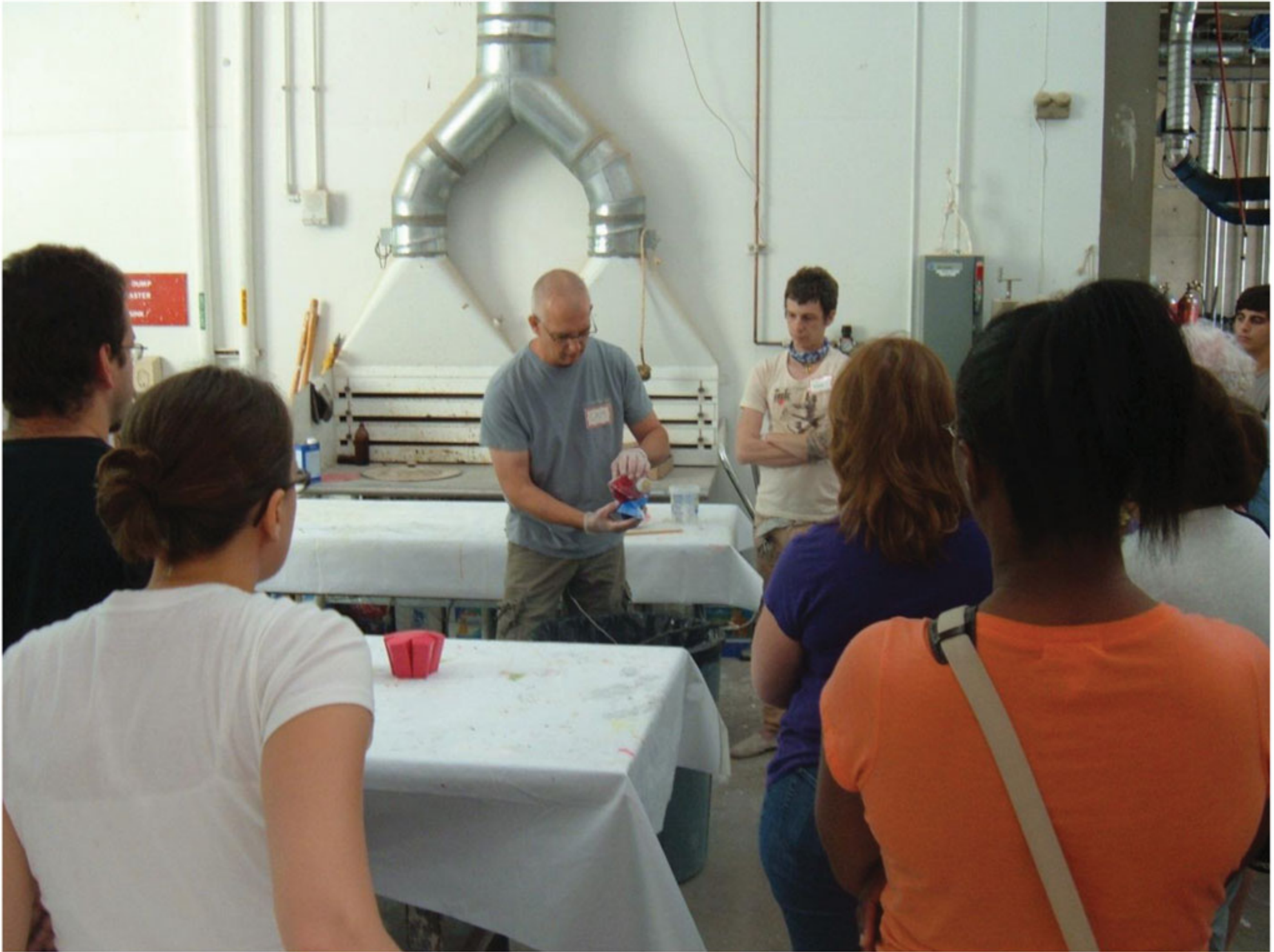

FIGURE 6 Professor Cam Schoepp demonstrates a new plastic casting material (color figure available online).

honor for art teachers: the Chair of Teaching Excellence for Fine Arts. These same two art teachers are providing art inservices for core teachers at their elementary schools and have also implemented night art classes for homeless youth in our area. Four additional teachers have begun graduate work in the field of art education. Over a dozen of the participants have held gallery shows or exhibitions of their artistic work. Over twenty of them have mentored preservice art teachers from TCU. The professional development experiences over the span of three years created an artistic community for the art teachers. Many of the art teachers have become close friends. Most of them tell me every time that I see them what an impact the summer professional developments had on them as artists. They share with me that they are still creating art outside of school time and that they are experiencing success with new pedagogy and methods in their classroom. I feel certain that this type of professional development truly met the participants' needs as artists and teachers. They gained art-specific knowledge and skills.

The district recognizes the impact that this professional development has had upon the teachers and is committed to providing similar experiences in the future. This past year, the district funded a yearlong workshop for twenty-five art teachers. One Friday each month, art teachers came to TCU for eight hours and used the space as their art studio. They worked alongside local artists and created personal artworks. I had the chance to talk with them formally and informally about how to develop techniques to reduce work stresses and solve dilemmas in their classrooms. I am confident that this new group of art teachers is receiving many of the same benefits as the art teachers who were included in the original grant. The district understands that this model works and creates a community of professionals who are committed to personal art-making and exemplary teaching.

At the outset of the workshops, my most cogent claim for the design and implementation of the model was that if I supported the teachers' work as artists, their work as art teachers would be enhanced. The most recent example I have

of the truth of this claim is my interaction with elementary art teacher Isabel Lopez. Recently, my senior art education class visited her elementary classroom, where she led a session on curriculum planning. At the end of our time with Isabel, I dismissed the students and stayed to talk with her. I found out that she had recently been recognized by her principal for helping her students with disabilities make gains in art and in their other core classes. She also disclosed to me that she was going through one of the hardest times in her life, as her father was experiencing the early onset of Alzheimer's. In the same breath, she told me that she would be fine, because she remembered what she learned about herself in our summer workshops. She had recently revisited her journals and sketchbooks from the workshops and remembered what a strong person she was and how this was expressed in her artwork. As a result of this looking back, she was creating more art, and this was helping her cope with her father's situation. With every subsequent interaction I have with teachers from these workshops, I am convinced that they will not be "left behind" in their classrooms or in their studios.

CONCLUSION

In this article, I described a model of professional development that meets the requirements of NCLB, NAEA, and the perceived gaps in professional development for art teachers. The nature, substance, and content of high-quality professional development should be designed by persons who are familiar with the culture of the school and district and aware of the needs of the teachers within that district. Teachers want to continue learning, and professional development opportunities are a primary vehicle in this lifelong pursuit. 93 percent of art educators surveyed about the impact of NCLB reported that they *wanted* to attend professional development workshops (Sabol 2006). Specifically, art teachers want to attend content-specific workshops that address their artistic development and pedagogical issues such as assessment in the art classroom and how to improve their effectiveness as teachers in the context of NCLB (Sabol 2013). They see the connection between their own progress and that of their students. However, in order for professional development to be effective, teachers must see the connection between the activity and their work as art teachers. There must be a perceived relevance of the content of these experiences to the skill set of the teacher's particular discipline. Designers of professional development experiences therefore should ensure that the content of their designs meets the needs of the individual teachers' situation. Not only will this increase the investment of the teacher in the development, it will also produce results that are germane to supporting effective practice in the discipline.

The intent of these ideas and recommendations is to begin a conversation that will challenge us all to examine ways to grow and change as professionals both within and without the assessment strategies and forms in today's educational landscape.

NOTE

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