Visual Arts Assessment in the Age of Educational Accountability: A Presentation of Research by Donna Goodwin, PhD
“Too bad he failed.”

- Seamus’ Art Teacher – actually a very good one
Educational Reform:
Locally, State, Nationally

RAISE YOUR STANDARDS
Educational Reform: Nationally, and State
Educational Reform:
Locally, State, Nationally
Misconception: Assessment is the same as evaluation.

Misconception: Assessment requires a test.

Misconception: Assessment always results in a grade (measurement).

Misconception: Assessment requires negative judgment.

Misconception: Assessment focuses on the product alone.
The relationship between visual art and assessment became “awkward if not overtly hostile” (Soep, 2004, p. 579).
Educational Reform: Nationally

President Obama’s Race to the Top
spurred 46 states to raise their teaching and learning standards with no new federal mandates

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Educational Reform:
State and Locally

EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS IN COLORADO

Every student has effective teachers and school leaders

ATTACT
- Recruitment

PREPARE
- Preparation
- Licensure & Qualifications
- Induction

SUPPORT
- Evaluation & Support
- S.B. 10-191
- State Model Evaluation System
- Professional Development
Educational Reform: Locally
The need to help clear confusion in the field of art assessment has led to my four research questions:
• What are acknowledged experts in the field doing to assess their students' learning?

• How does a teacher’s vision or philosophical view of art education alter or otherwise affect what and how they assess?

• What are art teachers’ perceptions of changes in assessment due to the increase in accountability measure associated with current educational reform?
• What is the significance of these ideas and practices of visual arts assessment for art education in general?
Assessment Defined:

“Although the terms are often used interchangeably, assessment generally refers to the appraisal of individual student performance... Evaluation generally refers to the appraisal of the program...” (Eisner, 2002, p. 178).
Method:
Qualitative, Arts-Based
Educational Connoisseurship and Criticism
• I’ve been an art teacher for over 20 years at all levels - a *connoisseur*

• I was on the writing team of the state art standards and was a reviewer for the new NCAS and the CDE Content Collaborative Assessment leader for VA – a *critic*

• No other *art assessment* research found using Educational Connoisseurship and Criticism as a method
The conceptual framework to piece all of the data together:

The five dimensions of Eisner’s Ecology of Schools plus the Aesthetic dimension added by Uhrmacher.
Selection process

6 art teachers in 5 different districts

- Snowball sampling starting with the members of the CCC
- Leader in art education, either in professional development or by association to higher art education
- Full-time public school art teacher
- At least 5 years experience
- As much of a variety as possible such as but not limited to: art ed philosophy, age, pedagogy, location, diverse population of their school
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Years Teaching</th>
<th>Grade Level Observed</th>
<th>CCC Association</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anita Radcliffe</td>
<td>Wildcat Ridge High School</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9, 10, 11, 12</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia Loren</td>
<td>Griffith K-8 Magnet Academy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilly Ewing</td>
<td>Greenwood Valley Elementary</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Quigley</td>
<td>Northern Parish Elementary</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zane Huxley</td>
<td>DeGroot Global Preparatory</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patti Starke</td>
<td>Erikson Middle School</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## The Sites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Site</th>
<th>Number of Enrolled Students</th>
<th>% Free/Reduced Lunch</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Native American or Alaskan</th>
<th>Two or More Races</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wildcat Ridge High School</td>
<td>1,992</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffith K-8 Magnet Academy</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>.4%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwood Valley Elementary</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Parish Elementary</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeGroot Global Prep</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erikson Middle School</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### What was observed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Grade Level Observed</th>
<th>Art Class Time Structure</th>
<th>Number of Class Periods Observed</th>
<th>Weeks Observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anita Radcliffe</td>
<td>Wildcat Ridge High School</td>
<td>9, 10, 11, 12</td>
<td>90 minutes every day for a quarter of the year, roughly 9 weeks</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia Loren</td>
<td>Griffith K-8 Magnet Academy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50 minutes once a week for 2 trimesters of the year, roughly 23 weeks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilly Ewing</td>
<td>Greenwood Valley Elementary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45 minutes for four days roughly every 3 weeks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Quigley</td>
<td>Northern Parish Elementary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45 minutes for 5 days roughly every 7 weeks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zane Huxley</td>
<td>DeGroot Global Preparatory</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>45 minutes for 3 weeks each trimester</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patti Starke</td>
<td>Erikson Middle School</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
<td>84 minutes every other day all year</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Within the conceptual framework I used these guiding thoughts to begin to analyze the data:

- The purpose of the assessment
- What is being assessed
- Procedures and instruments used
- How assessment is conducted
- Criteria used
- Who is being assessed and by whom
- Any differences in interactions with particular groups
- What is done with assessment results
Four Assessment Constructs were derived from the literature to create an analytical framework.

- Constance Lutz: *Student–Centered Assessment Facets*. 2014 Dissertation research
- Colorado Department of Education: *2014/2015 Colorado Teacher Quality Standards Standard VI: Teachers take responsibility for student academic growth. Elements A and B*
Research in the field entailed: observations of the teacher in his/her art room for one complete creative cycle – introduction of new learning to final creation and assessment.
Observation in the field entailed: teacher interaction with students, but not students on their own, analyzed through the 6 dimensions of schooling.
Research in the field also entailed:
Interviews with art teachers – both formal and informal, parents, and school administrators.
Research in the field also entailed:
Review of relevant documents.
Issues of Validity:

• Structural corroboration
• Consensual validation
• Participant validation
• Referential adequacy
Results are presented in narrative vignettes of each site using the framework of the Ecology of Schools with the Aesthetic dimension analyzed through CRISPA.
Planning with CRISPA

- Imagination (fanciful, intuitive, interactive)
- Perceptivity
- Active Engagement
- Risk-Taking
- Connections (emotional, communicative, sensory, intellectual)
- Sensory Experience
- Guiding Questions
This generated common themes as well as contradictions that came together to tell a bigger story about visual arts assessment.
What are these 6 acknowledged experts in the field of visual arts education doing to assess their students’ learning?
12 types of assessments

• Informal Observation/Questioning/Comments/Feedback
• Process Pages/Journals/Sketchbooks
• Informal Checks/Group Questioning
• Self-Assessment - formal and informal
• Artist Statements/Reflections
• Peer Critiques – formal and informal
• Project Specific Criteria/Checklists and/or Rubrics
• Creative Process Rubrics
• Portfolios – digital and physical
• Short Answer/Constructed Response Questions
• Bundled Measure Tests
• Formal Conferences/Interviews with Teacher Feedback
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis of Assessment use by teacher: Using Assessment Constructs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anita Radcliffe’s use of Informal Observation, Questioning, and Feedback</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beattie’s (1997) Principles of Quality Classroom Art Assessment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supports, rather than interferes with, instruction and course objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is continuous and focused on providing ongoing information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is contextual and authentic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focuses on products and process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is responsive to different types of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is responsive to expanded notions of intelligence and creativity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is concerned with students’ preconceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NAEA’s Standard VII: Visual Arts Educators Conduct Meaningful and Appropriate Assessments of Student Learning (2009)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a repertoire of assessment strategies consistent with instructional goals, teaching methods, and individual needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use multiple methods of assessment both formal and informal, formative and summative, and a range of assessment strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Practice assessment as a joint venture through which both student and teacher understanding is enhanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lutz (2014) Student-Centered Assessment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on Student Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Equitable and Contextual Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assessment Used Throughout Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Verbal Exchanges as Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of Assessment Data: Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of Assessment Data: Revisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student Involvement in Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CDE (2014) Colorado Teacher Quality Standard VI: Teachers take responsibility for student academic growth</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Element B Part Two: Teachers demonstrate their ability to utilize multiple data sources and evidence to evaluate their practice, and make adjustments where needed to continually improve attainment of student academic growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What was assessed?

- **Studio or Artistic Behaviors**
  (meaning varied i.e. SHoM or behaving well)
- **Artistic/Creative Process**
  (meaning varied: creative steps or following directions)
- **Learning Goals/Success Criteria**
- **Planning Process**
- **Required Steps for day**
- **Skills/Techniques**
- **Reflection of Thinking**
- **Checks for understanding of Directions or Concepts**
- **Personal Connections/Meaning Making**
- **Growth for Educator Effectiveness**
- **Pre and Post Assessment**
- **Teacher Knowledge of Student**
- **Formal Conferences/Interviews with Teacher Feedback**
- **Teacher use to Evaluate their own Practice**
- **Knowledge of Art Facts**
- **Appearance of Work**
Analysis of Assessment use by teacher:
The same assessment ‘tool’ or type does not mean the same use or the same experience
How does a teacher’s vision or philosophical point of view of art education alter or otherwise affect what and how they assess?
Stated Philosophies – Evidenced Pedagogies:
• Mrs. Radcliffe: Creative Process – Be a part of a community
  Creative Process Rubric Discussions, Student made portfolios of self and project process
• Mrs. Loren: Student Aesthetic is not necessarily a Teacher Aesthetic – moving away from teacher directed outcomes
  Older student Creative Process Rubrics, Class discussion, Teacher scored behavior rubric
• Ms. Ewing: DBAE ‘School Art Style’
  Class discussion, Teacher recorded grades based on observation of work/behavior
• Mrs. Quigley: Teaching for Artistic Behavior
  Studio Habits of Mind – Older students record on cards, younger document by teacher
• Mr. Huxley: Child Development – How the learning mechanism works
  Student made Process Rubric, Teacher/student interviews, Pre/Post artist statements, Process videos, required process steps records
• Mrs. Starke: Teacher directed – “Creative Thinking, Creative Process based”
"I expect you all to be independent, innovative, critical thinkers who will do exactly as I say!"
What are art teachers’ perceptions of changes in assessment due to the increase in accountability measures associated with current educational reform?
Perceived Benefits:

- A way to be able to show the value in what they do
- Opportunity to learn more about their profession
- Opportunity to know more about their students
- A chance to collaborate with like colleagues
- More targeted professional development

Perceived Challenges:

- Takes time away from making
- Forced change with which they may not agree
- Labor intensive for teachers and principals
- Fear being evaluated unfairly
Obstacles to change

• Fear of the pendulum swing
• Teacher survival training
• School stagnate structure
• Top-down, forced elements
What is the **significance** of these ideas and practices of visual arts assessment for art education in general?

* It is not about ‘the tool’

* Student ownership and agency

* Unintended consequences of assessment
Themes and Commonalities

* Assessment versus grading

* In Art, summative is still formative
Implications of research:

Like the teacher and the artist, the researcher wrestles with potentiality, makes judicious use of opportunity and feasibility, and directs attention to possibility. This can be a messy business, especially if the task is to not only reveal what is there, but to nudge aside what shouldn’t be. (Sullivan, 2002, p. 196)
Suggestions from these research findings:

* Moving beyond static practice
* Arts assessment literacy and professional development are a need
* Assessment can be a means of advocacy for the benefits of the arts
Suggestions for Further Research

* Student perspective of assessment
* Teachers perception over time
* Art teacher hidden or shadow curriculum
* Assessing behavior or learning
* Effective evaluation of art teachers
Final Thoughts from Experts

Not everything that matters can be measured, and not everything that is measured matters. (Eisner, 2002, p. 178)

It’s not our job as art teachers to assess student artwork. That sounds shocking, I know, but if you reflect on it for a moment, you’ll see that this statement is quite obviously true. It is our job as art teachers to assess student learning. (Gude, in Sweeney, 2014, p. 11)

Oftentimes what is known can limit the possibility of what is not, and it requires creative practice to see things from a new perspective. (Sullivan and Miller, 2013, p. 3)
Final Thoughts from this Research
Contact information:
Donna Goodwin, PhD

[Email links]

I am happy to share this PowerPoint, the assessment tools observed, or anything you feel would be helpful to you. The full research can be downloaded from ProQuest through your university or purchased from ProQuest. Thank you for attending this session!