

**Title**

Politics and the (De) Evolution of Art Education

**Catalogue Description**

What are the politics of the new National Standards? What needs do they address; how might they fall short? What is their relation to core values within art education? (29 words).

**Goal:** Research & Knowledge

**Session Format:** **Interactive Dialogue**

**Track:** National Standards or State Standards

**Presenters**

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**Description 350 word limit: (332)**

Do the new National Standards for Visual Arts and Media Arts advance the role of art education in today's school or do they represent a continuing drifting from the field's core values? In aligning art education to recognized best practice in general education, are we placing critical art education outcomes at risk? Through making art education more recognizable to mainstream practice, do we jeopardize losing our forward-thinking identity?

What are the politics that drove the need for the new National Standards for Visual Arts and Media Arts? What perceived needs do they address? What might be their potential short fall? What is their relation to persistent content, curriculum, and assessment problems within art education?

By beginning with ideas rather than skills (as prioritized in the original Standards), the new Standards position visual art within current politics of curriculum. They are a pragmatic attempt to move the broad middle of contemporary K-12 art education school practice (apparently conceptualized as located somewhere between media exploration and DBAE) toward more robust and assessable learning outcomes. In this sense, the Standards are a hard-nosed look at the field as it currently exists and offer practical advice for improvement

However, to meet a political need of improving general practice within the context of current educational views of curriculum and assessment, the Standards may overly privilege the Understanding by Design model (UbD), where our outcomes are clear and we build our curriculum backwards. UbD clarity may endanger core art education values, such as the ability of the student to reinvent the problem and find an authentically creative solution.

For the general educational good, we may diminish the forward thinking that is a defining element of the field and a critical contribution that art educators provide within

the cultures of schools. This presentation, led by two NAEA Distinguished Fellows, will be an interactive dialogue that seeks to steer participants to reflect on and consider how the politics of the new Standards might help us evolve or devolve toward “core” outcomes.

### **Related References**

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