

IN OREGON, MAY, 2009

# The Declaration

## of the Myriad Oregon Friends of the Young



### THEME ONE

Arts education allows for expression and creativity.

### THEME TWO

Arts education addresses multiple learning styles which may be missing in other academic areas.

### THEME THREE

Arts education develops critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

### THEME FOUR

Arts education develops conceptual and analytical skills that are essential in the 21st century workforce.

### THEME FIVE

Arts education nurtures intellectual and imaginative growth.

### THEME SIX

Arts education heightens self-concept and self-esteem.

### THEME SEVEN

Arts education develops self-discipline and responsibility.

### THEME EIGHT

Arts education teaches the value of sustained effort to achieve excellence.

### THEME NINE

Arts education improves academic achievement.

### THEME TEN

Arts education develops ability to work cooperatively with others.

WHEN IN THE LIFE OF AN OREGON CHILD IT BECOMES necessary to advance beyond Reticence, beyond a lapse in Personal Vision, or a loss of Innate Genius resident in the growing Mind, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth that confident station to which the process of Discovery shall entitle each Young Citizen, a respect for the Benefit of all Oregonians requires that we declare Certain Principles of learning that impel this Life.

We hold early Creative Experience to be indelible, and that all children need be offered, equally and abundantly, certain Rights that secure access to the formative Encounters of Art—and that among these are making original Work, savoring creative Practice, and the Pursuit of one's own generous Vision and articulate Voice.

To secure these Creative Rights for the young, art programs are instituted in schools and communities, deriving their just Purpose from the needs of our People. Whenever our ways with the Young become destructive of these creative experiences, it is the Obligation of the People of Oregon to lay a New Foundation, as it may seem to them Expedient, in order to effect our people's Safety and Happiness.

At every Stage of our state's history we have recognized the power of creative citizens to encounter, to consider, and in Good Company one with another to resolve by Insight, Wisdom, and Work together any difficulty that may confront us. And just as a River, in order to thrive in passage through the Tangle of Civilization, must begin pure at its source of Oregon Origin—Applegate, Rogue, Umpqua, McKenzie, Santiam, Chetco, Siuslaw, Trask, Deschutes, Malheur, Grande Ronde, Wallowa—so must a Child begin with pure encounter in the Ways of the Maker, the Inventor, the Architect of personal Image, Craft, Hue, Print, Dance, Drama, Song, and Story.

Therefore, Friends to the Children of Oregon, and Friends to the inventive Capacity that will be required of our people in Difficult and Dangerous Times, we here appeal to all Families, Schools, and Communities to adopt certain Creative Rights for each young Scholar of the Possible. We hold it only just, that each child be afforded these early and frequent Experiences in Creation, that our state may thrive. We thus Publish and Declare that each child is, and by right ought to be, free to advance our common cause through access to Art. For the support of this Declaration, we mutually Pledge to each other, and to the Children of Oregon, our Lives, our Fortunes, and our Honor.

— KIM STAFFORD, 2009



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If you believe in the ideas that are expressed in this Declaration, sign up to join the arts education network at: <http://oregonartseducationcongress.org>