NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AND ARTS EDUCATION:
A CASE STUDY

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NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AND ARTS EDUCATION:

A CASE STUDY

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Thesis

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to investigate the condition of public school arts education programs under the No Child Left Behind Act and gain views and insights on educators’ teaching experiences under the federal policy. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were utilized to conduct a case study of an Ohio public school district. The descriptive data collected for the research revealed changes in the curriculum for arts education, particularly in music. Information obtained from teacher interviews provided context in which the changes occurred, and it was the teacher interviews that brought about a more accurate representation of just how much learning opportunities in the arts had decreased. More specifically, the information illustrated how arts education was threatened by administrative decisions that were being made to improve test scores and accommodate policies mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act. Specific research questions for this study focused on NCLB’s affect on arts education in the school district. For example, we wanted to know if instructional time for the arts had been affected by the federal policy and whether the district’s curriculum changed under NCLB. We also wanted to know if arts teachers and non arts teachers made adjustments to their classroom practices and if changes in teaching strategies were effective. And finally, we wanted to see if school budgets and spending on arts education had changed since NCLB went into effect in 2002.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

History of the No Child Left Behind Act

Although the U.S Constitution does not make provisions for education – the Tenth Amendment leaves matters of education to the states – federal involvement in education is linked to issues of equity and the national concern for children in poverty (NCSL, 2005; Roza, 2005; Schugurensky, 2002). Through legislation and funding, the government helps the poor, children in particular, by using local educational institutions as the vehicle to provide federal assistance (Stein, 2004). For instance, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 came into effect as a round about way for the central government to help the poor and “break the vicious chain of hereditary poverty” (Stein, 2004, p. 33). ESEA was meant to provide a framework in which equity-oriented education policies could be implemented.

From the time Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965 until 2003, the federal government had spent more than $242 billion on education (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). Although government funding for education consistently increased over this 38 year period, a wide achievement gap still existed between the rich and poor, and white and minority students. In 2000, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) on reading showed that only 32 percent of fourth-graders could read at a proficient level. The 2001 NAEP subsequently
reported that the test scores of high-performing students have increased over time, while scores of low-performing students have declined (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). These disturbing statistics were one of the factors that motivated legislators to implement the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. This Act is a reauthorization of the ESEA and it is designed to hold schools accountable for students’ academic performances, which are measured through high stakes testing administered to students in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school. Schools are also expected to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by showing that a higher percentage of the district’s student population is at or above achievement levels in math, reading and writing each year. By the year 2014, NCLB requires one hundred percent of a district’s student population to achieve in these academic areas. Schools that receive federal funding are expected to work toward this goal. In short, the goals of NCLB are to improve achievement for all students, enhance educational equity, and ensure that there are more qualified teachers in the education system (Darling-Hammond, 2004).

**NCLB and Arts Education**

Many elements of ESEA have been preserved with the No Child Left Behind Act. For example, math, reading and language arts remain the central curricular focus of the federal policy. But there have been many significant changes and additions to ESEA since 1965. The one of interest here is the inclusion of the arts in the definition of core academic subjects under the No Child Left Behind mandate. It was not until 2002, when NCLB was signed into law by President George W. Bush, that the arts were officially recognized by the federal government as a critical element in the education and human development of our youth (Artscope). Theoretically, the arts now stand alongside
English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics and government, economics, history, and geography as a core academic subject.

Research on NCLB and Arts Education

Although the No Child Left Behind policy identifies a place for the arts in curriculum study, and our nations’ leaders recognize the importance of arts in developing problem solvers and socially conscious individuals, the arts and arts education are not systematically offered in schools across the nation. One reason is that a reduction in arts programs has occurred through many years of budget cuts and state budget deficits (Massie, 2004; McElroy, 2005). Another reason is that public and private funding sources for school arts programs have dwindled (Ashford, 2004). But there is also a concern that NCLB is negatively impacting arts education in public schools (Meyer, 2005).

Observers at an annual conference of the Education Commission of the States said that schools were overlooking the arts because they faced pressure from NCLB to improve reading and math achievement (Hoff, 2005). In another instance, Susan K. Sclafani, a U.S. Department of Education’s assistant secretary, expressed the department’s concern that schools were cutting arts related classes to focus on reading and math (Sack, 2005). Although the literature provides little quantitative data confirming the decline or elimination of arts education resulting from NCLB – Colwell (2005) and Ashford (2004) speak to this – there has been a considerable amount written expressing general fears and predictions that arts education will suffer due to the proliferation of mandated tests for math, reading, and science. For example, in “No Child Left Behind in Art?” Chapman (2004) wrote that less time will be available for art
instruction. Because few states have incorporated the arts into their accountability systems, Meyer (2005) prophesized an increased risk for the arts losing a place in the core curriculum.

Because the federal policy is only in its fourth year of implementation, there have been only a handful of studies baring quantitative data on NCLB’s impact on arts education. But these studies have provided some convincing evidence that the arts are losing a place in many schools’ curriculums across the country.

Statement of the Problem

NCLB was created to ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students and close achievement gaps among different groups of students. One way the Act has attempted to make this happen is by mandating public schools to test students in math and language arts. If students score poorly, schools and school districts are held accountable and given poor ratings. Education funding and local administrative control could be taken away as a result. Seemingly, an unintended consequence of these threats is that the arts and other non-tested subjects are being sacrificed in order to give students more instructional time in math and language arts, which is hoped to improve test scores and school ratings. This study wanted to investigate this problem and see if arts education is in jeopardy in a public school district with economically disadvantaged students.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this research was to investigate the condition of public school arts education programs under NCLB and gain views and insights on educators’ teaching experiences under the federal policy. Research questions for this study focused on
NCLB’s affect on arts education in the school district. For example, I wanted to know if instructional time for the arts had been affected by the federal policy and whether the district’s curriculum changed under NCLB. I also wanted to know if arts teachers and non arts teachers made adjustments to their classroom practices as a result of NCLB and if changes in teaching strategies were effective. And finally, I wanted to see if school budgets and spending on arts education had changed since NCLB went into effect in 2002.

Overview of Research Methods

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were utilized to conduct a case study of an Ohio public school district. Descriptive data, such as student demographics, art content areas offered as part of the curriculum, instructional time in the arts for each grade and each school year starting in 2001, and arts education spending, were collected from each school in the district. Teacher interviews were then conducted to provide contextual data about how teachers perceive the policy to be affecting arts education in their district and classrooms. The information obtained from these interviews was compared to data from the district to identify similarities and differences between teachers’ perceptions and administrative practices with regard to arts education and NCLB.

Limitations of the Study

The greatest limitation of this research is that it investigated only one school district. Because the data was collected from one source, the information could not be used to represent the condition of arts education under the No Child Left Behind Act in all public schools across the nation. In addition, school administrators’ views and
perspectives were not included in the inventory of data collected, and the small number of participants interviewed for this study may have provided an incomplete or narrow picture of the impact NCLB is having on arts education.

The Ribbon Valley School District

The school district studied, Ribbon Valley, was comprised of 5 buildings – one high school, one middle school, and three elementary schools – with a student population nearing 2,500. The district received Title I funds; thirty-two percent of the students were identified as economically disadvantaged, which was representative of the state’s average (Wood, 2004). Located in a rural area of Ohio, Ribbon Valley had struggled with education funding due to a declining property tax base and severe reductions in state and federal aid. The community surrounding the district was described as sports oriented and took a great interest in school sporting events.

Arts education as part of the formal curriculum at Ribbon Valley included music and visual arts only. These two subject areas were required at every grade in levels Pre K-8, and the district’s high school graduation requirement included 0.5 credits of Fine Arts (music and visual art were the only two options). Extra curricular activities such as high school marching band and drama club at the middle school level were offered to students. And for over 25 years, the district has sponsored an annual art show that displayed the artwork of all elementary school students and chosen works of middle school and high school students.

Definitions

The arts are defined as music, theater, dance and visual art. Arts education refers to instruction in any of these four content areas. For the purpose of this research, I was
looking at arts education as part of the formal curriculum.

    The formal curriculum is defined as required instruction in a subject that occurs
during regular school hours. After school programs were considered extra curricular
activities, not part of the formal curriculum.

    The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is a federal policy that mandates states to
test students in math, reading and writing from grades 3 through 8 and once in high
school. Test scores are monitored by the state and are used to hold schools accountable
for student achievement. Schools and school districts are rated according to test scores,
and schools must meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) to maintain good standing.

    Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) refers to a school district’s or school’s ability to
increase student achievement – a higher percentage of students must improve test scores
as well as score at or above proficiency level each year. Schools and school districts are
penalized if they do not make AYP for two years in a row. Funding as well as local
administrative control over educational practices and policies are forfeited if AYP is not
met.

*Principal Investigator’s Interest in the Research*

    The principal investigator’s interest in the arts and arts education stems from 12
years of professional performing experience in dance and eight years of teaching dance in
higher education. I believe that government policy is the only way to ensure the nation’s
youth an equal opportunity and access to a sound education – an education that produces
an appreciation for learning, diversity, discipline, creativity and change. As an artist and
teacher, I have personally experienced and witnessed the arts’ capacity to generate these
human possessions.
Conclusion

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) has been a topic of great debate among educators, politicians, and the public over its effectiveness to improve the quality of education for the nation’s youth and create academic achievers out of all students. In theory, NCLB intends to create equitable educational opportunities for all students and close achievement gaps among different groups of students, particularly between minorities and whites. In practice, it is argued that NCLB is “substituting one form of educational inequity for another” (Zastrow, 2004, p. 9). Even though the arts are defined as a core academic subject under NCLB, the federal mandate may be depriving students of learning opportunities in the arts, particularly in schools with high minority and disadvantaged populations where many students do not have access to dance or music instruction if these subjects are not already part of the formal curriculum.

Although this case study only offers a thumbprint image of the condition of arts education under the No Child Left Behind Act, it hopes to add to the limited amount of research and empirical data on the federal policy’s impact on arts education and disadvantaged students. Adding arts teachers’ perspectives and classroom experiences to the literature will provide stronger reinforcement in the argument for policy reform if it is needed. Teachers’ viewpoints will also provide a more accurate picture of student learning and classroom experiences, as teachers are the ones who have the most contact with students and student outcomes.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

The type of literature reviewed for this study included the importance of arts education, theoretical positions on NCLB and its impact on arts education as well as empirical data presented on this subject matter. A majority of the literature offered predictions that arts education is at risk under NCLB because the federal policy does not tie the arts into state accountability systems. Because NCLB is only in its fourth year of implementation, the number of quantitative studies available on NCLB’s impact on arts education was limited. But the research indicated that the arts and other non tested subjects are being sacrificed to allow more instructional time for math, reading and writing.

The Importance of Arts Education

In 2004, former U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige voiced his support for the arts and arts education under NCLB. In a “key policy letter” on arts education to superintendents across the nation, Paige (2004) stated that the arts have intrinsic value, enhance general academic achievement, and improve students' social and emotional development. Cultivating critical thinking skills is also a result of learning in and through the arts (Polin, 2005). The business community has voiced the need for employees who can think critically in addition to being creative and sensitive to the world around them. More of our nation’s leaders have begun to recognize that education in the
arts is one of the best ways to develop these abilities in all young children (Polin, 2005). For example, Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, chair of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) stated that his top priority at ECS was “integrating the arts into the K-12 curriculum as a way to improve student achievement and train students for the knowledge-based work force” (Ashford, 2004, p. 22). Huckabee has expressed the belief that by exposing children to the arts at an early age, students acquire skills that transfer to future employment success in addition to an improved quality of life through continued engagement in the arts.

The research on arts education outcomes provided a basis for these claims. For example, “Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development” offered an array of research that correlates arts learning with academic and social outcomes (Deasy, 2002). Horowitz (2004) provided evidence that arts integrated learning increases complex cognitive processes in students and promotes positive risk taking, an increase in self confidence, motivation, focus, persistence in performing tasks, and collaborative learning. And Hetland and Winner (2001) found that schools with strong arts programs often report improved academic achievement.

The importance of arts education is established in the literature. Understanding the role that arts education plays in human development was important to this research because it was necessary to know what kinds of learning outcomes were potentially lost if NCBL was found to have a negative impact on arts education in public schools.

Theories and Fears: Arts Education at Risk

There has been a considerable amount written expressing general fears and predictions that arts education would suffer due to the proliferation of mandated tests in
math and reading. For example, Chapman (2004) and Meyer (2005) expected that less time would be available for art instruction because few states have incorporated the arts into their accountability systems. A report by the National Center for Education Statistics (2002) predicted test-preparations and test taking to exceed twenty six hours, the amount of time elementary schools typically devote to visual arts instruction in a year. In general, stealing time away from art instruction in order to better prepare students for tests had been anticipated in the past. More recently, Cavanaugh (2006) and Kennedy Manzo (2006) reported that these predictions have become common practices in schools.

These reports were not supported by empirical data, however they were important to this study because they provided a source for research questions. For example, when performing this case study, I wanted to know if the curriculum and instructional time for the arts in the Ribbon Valley School District had actually been altered to provide additional time for learning in tested subjects. In other words, I wanted to know if the cited authors’ concerns were valid.

Quantitative Research

Three studies have provided empirical data with regard to arts education at risk under the No Child Left Behind Act. The Council for Basic Education (CBA) performed a survey of approximately 1,000 principals from four different states and published its findings in 2004 in a report titled “Academic Atrophy: The Condition of the Liberal Arts in America’s Public Schools.” The survey showed that less time was spent on social studies, civics, geography, languages, and the arts due to NCLB’s emphasis on reading, writing, and math. The survey also indicated that 25% of the schools saw a reduction of time spent on arts education over the last four years. Overall, 25% of the principals
reported decreases in instructional time allocated to the arts. In schools with high-minority student populations, 36 percent reported decreases. Predictions on arts education in the coming years were presented as well. Thirty three percent of all educators surveyed predicted future decreases while forty two percent of high-minority schools expected forthcoming cuts in arts education (Zastrow, 2004).

The second study, titled “Perceived Effects of State-Mandated Testing on Teaching and Learning: Findings from a National Survey of Teachers,” used an alternative perspective for measuring the effects of mandated testing. Rather than viewing specific populations, such as minority groups, the study classified students and educators as stakeholders. High stakeholders were defined as those who faced consequences as a result of tests scores, whereas test marks did not bring penalties or rewards for low stakeholders. Instructional time in the fine arts remained the same according to most teachers in all of the states. However, 35% percent of the teachers in states with high stakeholders (both students and teachers) indicated that instruction in fine arts had either greatly or moderately decreased (Pedulla, Abrams, Madaus, Russell, Ramos, & Maio, 2003). Although this study did not address issues of equity, it still gave an indication that state-mandated testing required under NCLB was impacting arts education to some degree.

The third and most recent study was published by the Center on Education Policy (CEP). Since 2002, CEP has offered annual reports on the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act at the federal, state and local levels. For the 2006 report, CEP surveyed 299 school districts representing all 50 states, performed case studies on 38 school districts and 42 schools, held three national forums, and offered six analyses on
NCLB issues. The comprehensive study showed that 71% of the school districts surveyed had reduced instructional time in at least one other subject to provide additional time for reading and math. This condition also showed up in the case studies by CEP. For example, schools in New Jersey and Nebraska indicated that “NCLB is resulting in less instructional time for history and the arts” and that, in some instances, the arts have been moved to after school programs (CEP, 2006, p. 98). Superintendents from some of the districts expressed fears of cutting music and arts programs from the curriculum altogether due to NCLB’s focus on core academic subjects. In addition, prescribing how and what teachers teach was becoming a more common procedure in some districts that were trying to improve test scores; this practice was creating less time for non-tested activities such as music, art and social studies (CEP, 2006).

As with the theoretical positions offered in the literature, these quantitative studies also provided a basis for research questions. Questions arising from the literature included wanting to know if teaching practices were being prescribed and whether or not the practices were affecting student learning. I also wanted to know how teachers viewed these practices and if they were effective for both tested subjects and non tested subjects such as the arts. The literature also gave some general guidance with regard to the type of descriptive and qualitative data needed to perform this case study. For example, it was important to understand the context in which arts education was remaining the same or changing in the school district. Obtaining data on subjects other than the arts was needed.
Limitations of the Literature

School administrators and teachers who taught tested subjects were the primary participants in these studies. Arts teachers were not found to be represented or used as a source in the collection of empirical data. This was seemingly due to the fact that these studies were not solely focused on the arts but rather sought to find broader implications of NCLB practices. The absence of arts teachers’ perspectives and experiences in the literature meant there were untapped resources available for investigators who wanted to better understand NCLB and the impact it was having on arts education. This study attempted to address this gap.

Most of the literature focused on instructional time for arts education and the arts as part of the curriculum. There was little mentioned about the impact NCLB has had on arts education funding. Although many criticize NCLB as an under funded mandate (Neill, 2004 & Darling-Hammond, 2004, for example), researchers have not investigated whether the federal policy was directly impacting a school district’s ability to fund arts classes. This study attempted to investigate this gap in the research as well.

Conclusion

The literature provided a solid foundation from which this case study departed from. The theoretical positions as well as the empirical data regarding NCLB’s impact on arts education were used to formulate the research questions for this project. The literature also provided data to use for comparative purposes in this case study. And finally, by identifying gaps in the literature and attempting to fill in those holes, this case study is ensured a needed place in the limited inventory of research on the condition of arts education under the No Child Left Behind Act.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODS

General Overview

This study explored arts education under the No Child Left Behind Act from the perspective of arts teachers and non arts teachers in one Ohio school district. Information collected for this study included data obtained from school principals and district administrators along with qualitative data from teacher interviews. Case study methods were used to conduct the research on NCLB’s impact on arts education. Case study methods were best suited because it enabled the researcher to explore in depth the condition of arts education in the school district and obtain an understanding of the central phenomenon through multiple forms of data collection.

Access to Research Site, District Data and Participants

When the Ohio school district was identified as a potential research site, the district superintendent was sent a letter requesting permission to interview teachers and collect information from administrators in the district. When permission was granted, school principals were sent letters and subsequent emails requesting descriptive data as well as permission to contact teachers and conduct interviews on school sites.

Participants

Two visual art teachers, two music teachers, and one math and one language arts teacher were identified and interviewed for this case study. (See Table 3.1). All six
teachers were considered “highly qualified,” as defined by NCLB, and had a minimum of five years teaching experience in the district. The purposeful sampling of participants for this study facilitated the collection of contextual data about how educators perceived NCLB to be affecting arts education in their district and classrooms. This sampling strategy also permitted a better understanding of teachers’ direct involvement with the federal policy and its affect on the schools’ curriculum, classroom practices, and student learning. Purposeful sampling is useful and appropriate in qualitative research because it enables the researcher to better understand the central phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2005).

Table 3.1: Teacher Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Grade Level/Content</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>Thompson</td>
<td>High School Visual Art</td>
<td>April 11, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Simpson</td>
<td>Middle School General Music</td>
<td>April 12/24, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Russo</td>
<td>4th Grade Language Arts</td>
<td>April 19, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>Chapman</td>
<td>6th Grade Math</td>
<td>April 27, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>Visual Art (grades 3-5)</td>
<td>April 27, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>Raven</td>
<td>Elementary Music (PreK-2)</td>
<td>April 28, 2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consent and Confidentiality

Internal Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained for the protection of human subjects. (See Appendix A). Participation in the case study was voluntary and informed consent statements were provided to teachers who granted interviews. All participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identity and confidentiality was guaranteed to promote candid responses from participants. The school district was also given a
pseudonym for the purpose of confidentiality. Information collected for this research was secured in a locked file cabinet in the principal investigator’s home. Audiotapes were destroyed upon the completion of transcription, and all data and documents will be destroyed with a shredder five years after this study is reported.

Data Collection

For the purpose of this research, arts education as part of the formal curriculum was the focal point of the investigation. Music and visual art were required and offered at every grade in levels K-8, and the district’s high school graduation requirement included 0.5 credits of Fine Arts. Dance and theater/drama were not offered at any grade level. Peripheral or extra curricular activities such as marching band and drama club were not considered, as they were not part of regular school-day instruction.

Qualitative data on arts education under NCLB in the Ribbon Valley School District was obtained through teacher interviews. One-on-one interviews were conducted in person and on site at each school. Interviews were audio taped with a digital recorder. If the need arose, participants were subsequently contacted through email to obtain additional information or clarification on points discussed during the initial interview. The principal investigator was the only researcher who conducted teacher interviews, which facilitated consistency in the inquiry process.

Semi-structured interview protocols were designed with open-ended questions to provide some structure for each interview while enabling the principal investigator the flexibility to elicit more discussion and clarifications from interviewees. (See Appendices B & C). In qualitative research, asking open-ended questions allows participants to express their views and experiences without the constraints of researcher’s
perspectives (Creswell, 2005). Conceptual ideas for the protocol came from the literature as well as from the principal investigator who had nearly eight years of professional experience in arts education.

Quantitative data on the district’s arts education budget and spending was collected from arts teachers, school principals and the district treasurer. School principals provided information on student populations, arts classes offered as part of the formal curriculum and instructional time in the arts for each grade and each school year starting in 2001. Data on instructional time spent on math, reading and science was also gathered and used for comparative and contextual purposes. Information including student demographics and district report cards were retrieved from the Ohio Department of Education web site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building/Administrator</th>
<th>Letter Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>High School A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School D</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School E</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Office T</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Office S</td>
<td>S</td>
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</tbody>
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The process for collecting district and school data included sending administrators a formal letter with an information request attached. An identical letter and information request (see Appendix D) was also sent in electronic form. The district superintendent, treasurer and school principals responded and provided all information electronically, as this method of communication was preferred by the administrators. Each of the five
school buildings/principals was assigned a letter code as were the superintendent and treasurer (see Table 3.2). All electronic documents were labeled and cataloged to correspond with the school administrator and building for which the information applied. For example, the high school building and principal were given the letter code “A.” All electronic documents that came from the high school principal and referenced the high school were subsequently labeled A1, A2, A3, etc. (See Appendix E).

Research Questions

The teacher interviews and data collection sought to answer the following questions:

Question I: Has instructional time for arts education in Ribbon Valley been affected as a result of NCLB’s policies?

Question II: Has the district’s formal curriculum for arts education changed since NCLB went into effect in 2002?

Question III: Have arts teachers and non arts teachers altered classroom practices as a result of NCLB and were the teaching strategies effective?

Question IV: Have arts education budgets and spending changed since NCLB went into effect in 2002?

Questions posed to teachers during interviews sought to answer all four research questions. A table cataloging the data collected from the district’s administrators is provided in Appendix E. The table lists an inventory of the source of data, type of data collected, date the data was obtained and the research question the data addressed.
Data Analysis

Teacher interviews were transcribed within three to five days after meeting with each teacher to ensure an accurate representation of participants’ perspectives in the final report of this research project. The text data was hand analyzed by the principal investigator. Text segments were identified and coded. Themes emerged from multiple readings of the data and provided structure for reporting the research findings and answers to the research questions. The information obtained during teacher interviews was compared to data from the district to identify similarities and differences between teachers’ perceptions and administrative practices with regard to arts education.

Validity and Reliability

Validity issues were addressed by sharing interview transcripts and drafts of the final report with research participants. Triangulation – the use of multiple data-collection methods and multiple sources of information for this project – also speak to validity, as obtaining information from different sources provide various angles from which to analyze the central phenomena (Creswell, 2005; Glesne, 1999). Data sources included arts teachers, non arts teachers, principals and other district administrators. Researcher bias was addressed by taking great care to formulate questions for the interview protocols so as to not lead teachers or carry my preconceptions into the interview process. I continuously explored my own subjectivity and reflected on my desire and pursuit for a particular research outcome. By recognizing and acknowledging my subjectivity, I was able to examine and analyze the research data with a more objective lens. These verification procedures are often used in qualitative research (Glesne, 1999).
Reliability was difficult to test for in this case study. There was only one investigator, so qualitative data was not obtained by another researcher. Additionally, teachers had a limited amount of time to be interviewed; granting a second interview to another researcher to test for reliability would have been burdensome to the teachers.
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

The findings of this study are similar to what has been found in the research regarding the impact the No Child Left Behind Act has had in schools. Given the literature today, it was not surprising that arts education in the Ribbon Valley School District was threatened and showing signs of deterioration. For example, music and other non tested subjects at Ribbon Valley were cut to make more time for math and language arts instruction. Themes that emerged from the data included changes in the curriculum and instructional time, changes in teaching strategies and challenges in funding for arts education. This study has attempted to document the beginnings of a decline in arts education due to mandated testing in math and reading under NCLB.

Curriculum Changes and Instructional Time for Arts Education: “It’s the Scores that Drive it a Lot”

The investigation on the curriculum and instructional time for arts education revealed that music and visual art education for grades K-5 remained generally the same since 2001. The only change was an addition of a rhythm and movement class in the 2005 school year that met once a week for nine weeks at the Pre-K and Kindergarten level. This class was added by the school principal who wanted to take some of the stress off of the gym teacher.
At the middle school level, the music curriculum was found to have experienced a cut. In grades 6-8, math, language arts, science and social studies were each getting 55 minutes of daily instructional time from 2002-2005. At the start of the 2005-2006 school year, district administrators increased class time for math and language arts to 84 minutes a day per subject. Five of the six teachers interviewed determined the increase in math and language arts to be “because of the state tests” (Interview/Participant #2, p 1.). “We are trying to get the scores up in math right now… and reading. They’re both low; [the students are] not meeting the standards, so [the administration] is pushing it more” (Interview/Participant #4, p. 3).

To accommodate the increase in math and language arts, science and social studies instruction were reduced to 42 minute periods each day, and the music curriculum was significantly modified. Prior to the scheduling change, all middle school students attended general education music classes. For example, all 8th grade students studied music history, all 7th grade students received instruction on keyboarding and music theory, and all 6th graders learned about families of instruments and their acoustical profiles. In addition to these yearly general music requirements, all middle school students had the option to participate in band and choir classes. But to make room for the increased class periods in math and language arts, band and choir had to be scheduled at the same time as the general music classes; students lost the opportunity to study both general music and band and choir. The administration’s answer to this problem, according to one of the music teachers, was “if [you] want more time for music, then [you] should have it all after school” (Interview/Participant #2, p. 11).
Because of the altered scheduling, general music became a requirement for only those students who did not elect to take band and choir, and as a result, the number of general music classes went from six sections a year to three. “I saw every kid in the building throughout the year… and now I see a very, very small portion of them,” stated Mrs. Simpson, the general music teacher (Interview/Participant #2, p. 8). Even though class periods for the general music classes had been and remained at 42 minutes daily for nine weeks out of the school year, the music curriculum narrowed for many students who elected to take band and choir.

Band and choir students were identified by the music teacher as those most interested in furthering their learning in music and developing skills in the music discipline. Mrs. Simpson expressed a concern for these students who might want to major in music at college but would lack keyboarding skills along with some knowledge of music theory and music history that would have been acquired in the general music classes. Mrs. Simpson also feared that by eliminating opportunities for instruction in these areas, it was putting students at a disadvantage when applying for college admission to music programs. Music history, music theory and keyboarding instruction were offered at the high school level. But they were not required classes, unlike under the middle school’s curriculum prior to the scheduling change that allotted more time for math and language arts.

Teacher interviews revealed that time for music instruction throughout the district was expected to be reduced further if math scores on state tests linked to NCLB did not improve in the current year. Mr. Raven, one of the music teachers, stated that “if our math test scores don’t go up, we are going to lose more time in music. They told that at a
music meeting. So that tells me right there that math is really important for one reason or another, and it’s the scores that drive it a lot” (Interview/Participant #6, p. 4). The other music teacher interviewed for this study confirmed the administration’s warning that music education would be cut further if test results were inadequate.

Upon reviewing Ribbon Valley’s report cards and test scores, it became clear why math test scores were so important to district administrators. It was found that, although the school district received a rating of “Effective” on its 2004-2005 report card, the district did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and was labeled “At Risk” under “District Improvement Status.” Sixth grade math, science and writing test scores went down in 2004-2005 from the previous year. And 7th and 8th grade math scores were 4 percentage points and over 8 percentage points respectively below the state requirement of 75%. A general feeling among the teachers at the time this study was conducted was that math test results for the current year would be insufficient to increase student achievement in the district. This would bring about a second year of not making AYP and move Ribbon Valley into “District Improvement Status.” The district’s report card rating was riding on math scores.

Visual art saw a change at the high school level as well. Although the state of Ohio does not mandate Fine Arts credits for high school graduation, Ribbon Valley requires 0.5 credits in this content area. This arts requirement had been in place prior to the enactment of No Child Left Behind. Instructional time for visual arts classes had increased from 42 minutes to 47 minutes in the 2005-2006 school year, as did all subjects such as math, science, social studies and language arts. The reason for this change, as perceived by the teachers, was that “we needed to be more focused and spend more time
on science and math and those areas that schools traditionally struggle in’
(Interview/Participant #1, p. 4).

By adding 5 minutes to each class period, the high school schedule went from 9 periods a day to 8 periods. But because there was one less period each school day, opportunities for learning in art were reduced. For example, five Art I classes were offered during the year under the 9 period system. Only three sections of Art I became available with the 8 period days. Essentially, the high school arts curriculum had not changed, but learning opportunities in the arts had been reduced. The elimination of some of the Art I classes was anticipated to lead to a decline in enrollment for upper level art classes and ultimately “decimate” the art program, according to the high school art teacher (Interview/Participant #1, p. 4). In addition, having less Art I class sections created a bottleneck effect for those students who wanted to take visual art; classes could hold only a certain number of students so some students have to be turned away each semester.

The 2004-2005 school year was the first year 10th graders took the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT), a state mandated exam that a student must pass in order to receive a high school diploma. Subjects tested for the OGT include reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies, all of which students’ scores are declared on the district and high school report cards. Math and reading scores from the OGT are also used for NCLB accountability.

There is a good indication from the data that the district’s move to increase class time and reduce the number of periods in a school day at the high school level was meant to accommodate tested subjects. Unfortunately, by reducing the number of class periods
in a day, the curriculum was narrowed, which diminished high school students’ opportunities for arts education at Ribbon Valley.

The narrowing of the curriculum in both the high school and middle school was a phenomenon reflected in the literature. (See Wood, 2004; Zastrow, 2004; and CEP, 2006). Also, the high stakes factor presented by Pedulla, et al (2003) was at issue in the Ribbon Valley School District. Administrators in Ribbon Valley are high stakeholders because district schools receive Title I funds and are under pressure to produce improved test scores or face penalties. In order to facilitate better test results in math and reading at the middle school, the district decreased the fine arts curriculum, like those high stakeholders investigated by Pedulla, et al (2003). Although the high school arts curriculum was not actually cut, stakeholders’ efforts to devote more time to tested subjects lead to a reduction in learning opportunities in visual arts.

*Instructional Strategies and Teaching Effectiveness: “Multiple Opportunities for Assessment, Multiple Opportunities for Learning”*

Changes in instructional strategies throughout the district had come about since 2002. Adjustments to classroom practices were associated with aligning instruction to Ohio state standards and mandated testing of those standards under the No Child Left Behind Act. Mrs. Chapman, the math teacher interviewed for this study, indicated that the administration pressured her to use math resources that had been acquired through a grant. The resources were described as providing a more hands on learning experience for the students; the teacher adopted a supervisory role with the new instructional materials and moved away from the traditional style of whole group teaching. According to Mrs. Chapman, the administration wanted to implement this new teaching strategy
because “it showed there is better learning, students learn better this way… and students weren’t succeeding the other way, the traditional way” (Interview/Participant #4, p. 7). The term “succeeding” was used by the teacher as a reference to outcomes on mandated tests. This tells us that student success at Ribbon Valley was measured by test scores as opposed to other indicators such as a student’s ability to cooperate with others.

The math resources provided instruction on a series of state math standards. Students had to complete math exercises linked to a specific standard and then pass a test before they could move on to the next standard. If a student did not perform well on the test, he/she would have to return to practice exercises associated with the standard and complete additional work. The student would then be allowed to retake the test. This cycle would occur repeatedly until the student achieved an adequate score on the exam. The math teacher had a positive view of this strategy, as it was thought to provide students with a deeper comprehension of math skills that was necessary for achievement on state tests.

Retesting had become an adopted teaching strategy throughout the entire district. Tests designed by classroom teachers were expected to cover specific standards. When a student missed test questions that correlated with certain standards, the student was given as many chances to retake portions of a test until every standard was passed. Both the math and language arts teachers indicated that the reassessment practices were prescribed by the administration in the last two to three years. One of the music teachers said she was told that the reassessment policy came from the state. Regardless of the source, the district had adopted a system whereby no student was able to fail. The language arts teacher explained:
The idea is multiple opportunities for assessment, multiple opportunities for learning. So you bomb, you intervene, you teach, and then you reassess… That’s one of our basic thinking and philosophy. You know, you can’t accept the fact that the kid failed. You gotta do something; you have to intervene; you have to try another way. (Interview/Participant #3, p. 7).

Reassessment strategies were thought of favorably by the teachers whose subject areas were tested. This practice, along with moving from whole group teaching to small group instruction, another teaching strategy that had recently been implemented, was viewed as making teachers more effective and giving teachers a better chance to identify students’ academic deficiencies. Alternatively, one of the music teachers interviewed did not view retesting as a constructive mechanism. Reassessing students essentially decreased student learning and teaching effectiveness in a music class:

With this No Child Left Behind thing, the idea is you keep teaching the same concept until he knows it. You don’t move on until he gets that concept. Well, a lot of these kids are taking advantage of it… I’m giving a test on the renaissance period tomorrow, and I’ve told them, I said, from now on, there will be no more retesting, which is supposedly one of our requirements. We are supposed to be testing and retesting to make sure they know the material. Well, first of all, if you give them the same test over and over enough times, they are just going to know the test. But they ask me, why not? And I said, I read the test to you; we find the answers in your worksheets; we highlight them; we review in class. We have a review quiz everyday. I said, I don’t think you need another chance. You should be prepared the first time. Now, if the retest was showing me that your grades were coming up and you were actually studying and learning the stuff you didn’t know the first time around, it would be different. But they don’t. They just think that they can continue to retest and retest and retest and they don’t put any more additional work into it. Well, that takes out of my… this was new this year for us. So, the first nine weeks, I didn’t get anywhere because I kept retesting and going over the same material in class. And those kids figured out, well, as long as we’re retesting, we’re not moving on. This is great! And I’m thinking, we’re only going to get one time period done in nine weeks, and we have six time periods to get done. So the second nine weeks I started retesting during lunch. I didn’t take class time any more. We didn’t take class time to go over anything. It was all during lunch. Well, sometime they would show up to retest, sometimes they wouldn’t. They’d forget. They choose not to come because I can always do that the next day. Well, again, this just keeps dragging it out and dragging it out. And what I found out is that the kids get confused. If he is retesting on the medieval
period today, and we’re half way through the renaissance period today, he’s getting everything mixed up; because I see renaissance answers appearing on his medieval test. And it’s not working. At least in my class it’s not working. So, like I said, I told them today, we are not retesting anymore. I don’t feel like I’ve accomplished anything this year compared to where I should be. (Interview/Participant #2, p. 15).

The data did not provide any indication that the reassessment policy applied to or affected visual art classes in the district. However, the data did suggest that Ribbon Valley administrators were taking a more prominent role in student learning and prescribing what and how teachers teach. Teachers interviewed indicated that NCLB and the need to improve student achievement, as measured by test scores, were driving administrators to be more involved with teaching strategies and classroom practices. The study by the Center for Education Policy (2006) presented us with this phenomenon. But without discussing the motivation for their increased involvement directly with administrators, a conclusive statement cannot be made regarding this issue.

Arts Education Resources: “We Just Don’t Have the Money”

This case study did not find direct evidence that NCLB was impacting spending on arts education in the Ribbon Valley School District. The district administration was unable to provide specific data on arts education budgets and spending. Seemingly, no administrator or office kept a complete record on how much money was spent on arts education. However, from teacher interviews and information collected from school principals, it appeared that there was little change in arts education expenditures since NCLB went into effect.

According to the district treasurer, visual arts teachers purchased their materials two ways, either with fees charged to the students and parents (consumable materials
fees) and/or with money provided from the school’s building budget. Consumable materials fees for students in grades K-5, which covered the expense of paper, paint, and other visual art materials requested by teachers, had ranged from approximately $1.50 to $2.35 per student since 2002.

The middle school’s building budget reserved about $2,000 a year (approximately $3.79 per student) for visual art materials used by the art teacher as well as regular classroom teachers. At the high school level, consumable materials fees for visual art instruction were consistently $6 per student for a half year or $11 per student for an entire year of art classes. In addition, the high school building budget provided the art teacher with $1,500 in the 2001-2002 school year, but it had decreased to $1,200 by 2005-2006, which was likely due to building budgets being cut in half (see below). Large equipment or special purchases were dealt with on an as needed basis. For example, a kiln had recently been purchased for one of the elementary schools; it was paid for by the district office.

With the exception of purchasing new music books for the elementary school students, the general music teachers in grades K-5 were not given any annual funds to purchase classroom teaching materials. Teachers’ views of the district’s resources were that “we just don’t have the money” (Interview/Participant #6, p. 12). Band and choir teachers for grades 6-12 received some funds from the building budgets to buy sheet music; and the middle school music teacher purchased music books with the “principal’s funds, which they cut in half last year…he got me the books, but it was very unwillingly” (Interview/Participant #2, p. 17). Most of the music and art teachers in the district spent their own money – anywhere from $300 to $2000 a year – to purchase classroom
materials that were not covered by consumable materials fees or building budgets. This had been the case for as many years as the teachers had been teaching in the district.

The high school art department fundraised each year, and there were booster clubs and parent organizations that provided some monetary assistance to art and music teachers so additional classroom materials could be purchased. Although budgets were limited or even non existent for many arts classes, music in particular, there was no indication from the teachers in the district that NCLB had any direct role in influencing the amount of money spent on arts education. Obtaining sufficient funds for music and art had always been a challenge. Arts education represents only a very small percentage of total K-12 expenses in public education (O’Fallen, 2006). This appears to be the case here as well; there was an extensive history of personal spending by teachers and low expenditures on music and visual arts by the Ribbon Valley School District.

Funding education overall was problematic for the district. In year 2005-2006 alone, Ribbon Valley’s property tax payments declined nearly $1 million, and state aid was reduced by $800,000. One area where the budgetary effects were seen was in the building budgets, which were cut by more than half over the previous four years. For example, the middle school’s building budget was $72,000 in fiscal year 2002 and fell to $31,500 by fiscal year 2005. In relation to arts spending, the percentage of the middle school’s building budget reserved for visual arts materials was 2.8% in 2002 and more than doubled to 6.35% in 2005, as the amount spent on arts materials ($2,000) stayed the same while the building budget dropped. Even though funding for arts education was limited to begin with, expenditures were not cut when the district’s finances fell.
Federal funding echoed the declining pattern in state and local funding as well. Title I monies received by the district consistently dropped in a four year period. In the 2002-2003 school year – the first year of NCLB – Title I funds totaled over $290,000. This amount decreased to less than $220,000 by the 2005-2006 school year. Student enrollment had remained the same over these four years while the number of economically disadvantaged students rose five percentage points. So the reason for less Title I funding could not be attributed to an improvement in the students’ socio economic status.

An attempt was made to acquire data on expenditures and consumable materials fees for math and language arts instruction. However, the district could not provide this information so a comparative analysis with the arts education budget and spending on tested subjects could not be performed. The alternative approach was to look at grant money acquired by the district. The treasurer reported that since 2001, only a single grant for $3,000 was obtained in 2003-2004 to start the middle school’s theater group, an after school program. No funds or grants were received for arts education as part of the formal curriculum during this time period. (One of the elementary schools in the district had received a grant for a fourth grade language arts project that integrated social studies and art, but it was not included in the treasurer’s report).

The district could not provide information on grants and funds received for other areas of instruction such as math or reading. However, teachers indicated that grants obtained by the school district were numerous. One of the teachers interviewed stated, “There have been so many this year. It’s unbelievable how much money they have brought in just from the grants” (Interview/Participant #4, p. 8). Another teacher
mentioned, “We live and die by grants in this district…for books, for technology. That’s how we get by” (Interview/Participant #1, p. 6). Other teachers interviewed made similar comments. These remarks illustrate the district’s funding plight and the lack of local, state and federal resources available to Ribbon Valley. It also shows that the No Child Left Behind Act is an under funded mandate, as the district has had to seek out alternative sources to cover the cost of educating students under the federal policy.

Obtaining grants for visual art and music was deemed very difficult. The general consensus among the arts teachers was that it was challenging to get grants to pay for art or music supplies and instructional materials such as instruments, recorded music, workbooks and even sound equipment and batteries for keyboards that would last an entire class period, because these things do not qualify for grant funds. However, finding funds to purchase classroom materials did not appear to be such a problem for other subjects such as math. The district’s curriculum director was writing grant applications and acquiring grant money to purchase resources for this subject. For example, the middle school math teacher said that the curriculum director was “paying for most of the supplies we use” with grant money (Interview/Participant #4, p. 8). The instructional materials and grant acquired to purchase resources were unsolicited by the math teacher. On the other hand, obtaining grants for arts education did not appear to demand the same attention from the curriculum director – the director had sent information on grant applications to one of the music teachers who was expected to write her own grant. As the arts are not linked to the state’s accountability system, it is not surprising that the curriculum director would focus her efforts on obtaining funding sources for tested subjects and neglect music and visual art.
Since the literature did not provide any background information on arts education funding under NCLB, comparative data for this portion of the study was not available. However, the data offered a starting point for future research and will be useful if the Ribbon Valley district is revisited for additional study. Also, the data provided a context in which funding for arts education competes with a budgetary crisis that many schools face in the nation as support from local, state and federal sources declines.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Summary

The data collected for this research indicated that the No Child Left Behind Act was having an impact on arts education in this particular school district studied. Although there were a variety of factors, such as budgetary constraints due to a decreasing tax base, that influenced the district’s practices and policy making decisions, a correlation between NCLB and the condition of arts education could be drawn. The descriptive data collected for the research revealed changes in the curriculum as well as adjustments to instructional time for tested and non tested subjects. Information obtained from teacher interviews provided context in which the changes occurred, and it was the teacher interviews that brought about a more accurate representation of just how much learning opportunities in the arts had decreased. More specifically, the data illustrated how much arts education was threatened by administrative decisions that were being made to improve test scores and accommodate provisions mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act. Another side effect of the federal mandate was that teaching strategies were being altered to achieve desirable outcomes on state standardized tests. And with regard to funding, the research showed that the district’s spending on arts education, however minimal, was seemingly unaffected since NCLB was enacted. However, the federal mandate may have had an indirect effect, as there was an indication that obtaining grants
and funding for tested subjects were the district’s priority over securing money for music and visual art education.

Discussion

The administration’s decision to reduce music instruction at the middle school level was driven by an effort to improve student achievement on state mandated math tests under the No Child Left Behind Act. Increasing daily class meetings for math and language arts from 55 to 84 minutes in grades 6-8 brought about a reduction in the music curriculum. According to Cavanagh (2006), lengthening class time in math and reading has been an increasingly common practice in schools across the country. This practice was fearfully predicted by many – Chapman (2004) and Meyer (2005) for example – to put the formal arts education curriculum at risk, which is what is happening in the Ribbon Valley School District.

Kennedy Manzo (2006) referred to penalties tied solely to inadequate student test scores in reading and math, resulting in a school’s tendency to spend more of their efforts on improving student achievement in those subjects. The investigation of Ribbon Valley revealed added efforts by way of reassessment practices, which were prescribed by the administration as a means to improve test scores. Retesting was allowing teachers to intervene and provide students with multiple opportunities to develop academic skills and retake exams designed around standards that would later be seen on state tests. Although it was too soon to tell if the reassessment policy was producing desirable outcomes on state tests, the retesting efforts did not prove effective for student achievement in music at the middle school level. Retesting slowed class progress in this arts discipline. Because students knew they had multiple opportunities to pass a test, they were not being
responsible for the material taught to them. In effect, learning was not occurring in music
class, and it goes to show that a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching can be detrimental
in the education of our youth.

Prior studies have not offered arts teachers’ perspectives on NCLB’s impact on
arts education. Including them in this case study proved important, as the music and
visual arts teachers provided valuable insights that might otherwise go unnoticed by
school administrators, non arts teachers, and even federal policy makers. For example,
one of the music teachers interviewed noted that many students were losing out on
learning opportunities in music theory and music history, subjects that make students
competitive for music programs in higher education. Also, the arts teachers offered
valuable information on classroom experiences and how a policy to improve student
achievement on tested subjects were negatively affecting student learning in music.

*Suggestions for Further Research*

Both of these problems identified by the teachers have a marginalizing effect on
the arts. In addition, these circumstances could ultimately lead to a shortage of musicians
and music teachers in public education or cause the decline of community support for the
arts because students had not developed an appreciation for the arts in school. Future
research on the No Child Left Behind Act should include arts teachers to help
investigators identify short term problems in schools that could potentially have long
term effects on the arts.

Including administrators’ views as well as additional perspectives and experiences
of arts teachers, teachers of tested subjects, and teachers of non tested subjects in future
research would ensure a more comprehensive investigation of a district’s arts curriculum
and classroom practices impacted by NCLB. Also, working closely with administrators to determine budgets and spending for tested and non tested subjects will be necessary to gain a better understanding of NCLB’s impact on arts education. And finally, giving students a voice in the research should be considered. Student perspectives would broaden our understanding of the condition of arts education under the federal policy. For example, it might be valuable to know how students felt about the narrowing of the music curriculum in the middle school and how it affected their schooling experience.

Conclusion

Ribbon Valley’s decision to de-emphasize the arts curriculum decreased opportunities to improve math and language arts skills. Active engagement in the arts increases academic achievement. This mantra appears throughout the literature on arts education (Meyer, 2005). But many schools resort to cutting the arts any way, and Ribbon Valley is a case in point. With an accountability system that underscores math and reading, the threat of failing report cards, and yearly reductions in Title I funds, the educational environment under NCLB makes it difficult for the Ribbon Valley administration and similar administrations across the country to place arts education high on the list of educational priorities.

At the time this report was being written, the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee approved a funding bill for 2007 that would eliminate funds for the U. S. Department of Education Arts in Education program. If the bill is passed, funding for research on arts education, the development, improvement, and dissemination of model arts education programs, and other arts education initiatives will be non existent in 2007-2008. This loss of funding, in conjunction with declining federal appropriations
to finance NCLB, will further aggravate the condition of arts education in districts like Ribbon Valley, where administrators struggle to fund all educational programs, not just the arts. Furthermore, there will be fewer resources available to help school districts strengthen the role of the arts in the curriculum, which could improve overall student achievement, not to mention enhance the educational experiences of our youth.

The Ribbon Valley School District is made up of 32% economically disadvantaged students. However, one hundred percent of the district’s students will be educationally disadvantaged – if they have not been already – if the arts are further reduced or cut from the regular school day curriculum. Equity in education is the foundation from which the No Child Left Behind Act was built. This philosophy is undermined with the emphasis on math and language arts (and soon to be science), which is forcing schools with limited resources to take away learning experiences and opportunities for students to succeed in other subjects such as the arts.
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http://fcis.oise.utoronto.ca/~daniel_schugurensky/assignment1/1965elemsec.html


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

March 13, 2006

Cyndiey Spohn
3020 Kemble Ave.
Akron, Ohio 44319

Ms. Spohn:

The University of Akron's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) completed a review of the protocol entitled "No Child Left Behind and Arts Education: A Case Study". The IRB application number assigned to this project is 20060309.

The protocol was reviewed on March 10, 2006 and qualified for exemption from continuing IRB review. The protocol represents minimal risk to subjects and matches the following federal category for exemption:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) Information is recorded in such a manner that subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to subjects; AND (ii) any disclosure of responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of civil or criminal liability or be damaging to subjects' financial standing, employability or reputation

Enclosed is the informed consent document, which the IRB has approved for your use in this research. In addition, your request for a waiver of documentation of informed consent, as permitted under 45 CFR 46.117(c), is also approved.

Annual continuation applications are not required for exempt projects. If you make any changes or modifications to the study's design or procedures that either increase the risk to subjects or include activities that do not fall within one of the categories exempted from the regulations, please contact the IRB first, to discuss whether or not a request for change must be submitted. Any such changes or modifications must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to their implementation.

Please retain this letter for your files. If the research is being conducted for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, the student must file a copy of this letter with the thesis or dissertation.

Sincerely,

Sharon McWhorter
Interim Director

Cc: Sandra Spickard Prettyman, Advisor
Department Chair
Phil Allen, IRB Chair
APPENDIX B

ARTS TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Project: No Child Left Behind and Arts Education: A Case Study

Cydney Spohn, Principal Investigator

Time of Interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of Interviewee:

Purpose of study: to understand the condition of arts education under NCLB
Sources of data: Ribbon Valley School District and teachers
Ensure confidentiality: pseudonyms will be used for participants; tapes will be destroyed after transcription; only the principal investigator knows identity of participants; all data and documents will be securely stored in a locked file cabinet.
Length of interview: approx. 30-40 minutes

*Turn on tape recorder and test it.*

QUESTIONS:

1. I understand your district has an annual art show. Can you tell me a little bit about the art show and what you do to participate in it?

   What is the reason for having the art show each year?
   How long has the art show been an annual event?
Do all students in the district participate in the art show?

What do you think the students get out of the art show?

2. What do you hope your students learn from your classes and instruction?

3. What do you think is the most important thing for students to learn in school?

4. How do you think this is achieved?

5. What subjects are emphasized in your school’s formal curriculum?

   Why are these subjects emphasized?

6. Since you began teaching at this school, has the formal curriculum gone through any changes?

   Explain.

7. What is the reason for these changes?

8. What role do you think the arts have in education?
9. Since you have been at this school, has instructional time for arts classes changed?

   If yes, explain.

   What is the cause of the change?

10. In the last four years, have you seen changes in instructional time for your subject area?

    If so, what have the changes been?

    What is different?

    What has brought about the change?

    Have you seen the same changes in other subject areas?

    Do teachers have flexibility to change the amount of instructional time for their subject areas?

    Do all students receive the same amount of instructional time for art?
    Are there any instances where a student does not attend your class?

11. Have you changed instructional strategies in the last five years?
    If so, give examples/explain.

    What brought about these changes?
12. Since you began teaching at this school, have resource allocations shifted? 

   Explain.

   Does this affect your teaching strategies?

   Does this affect your teaching effectiveness?

13. Do you believe the arts should be a part of the core curriculum in the education of our youth?

   If yes, should art be tested?

14. Congratulations on your school’s academic performance last year. Your school received a report card rating of (Excellent or Effective). To what do you attribute your school’s rating?
APPENDIX C
NON ARTS TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Project: No Child Left Behind and Arts Education: A Case Study
Cydney Spohn, Principal Investigator

Time of Interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of Interviewee:

Purpose of study: to understand the condition of arts education under NCLB
Sources of data: Ribbon Valley School District and teachers
Ensure confidentiality: pseudonyms will be used for participants; tapes will be destroyed
after transcription; only the principal investigator knows identity of participants;
all data and documents will be securely stored in a locked file cabinet.
Length of interview: approx. 30-40 minutes

*Turn on tape recorder and test it.*

QUESTIONS:

1. What are your favorite things to teach?

2. Do you practice interdisciplinary teaching in your classroom?
Why or why not?

Describe / explain.

3. What do you hope students learn from your classes and instruction?

4. Do you participate in the annual art show?

   Do all students participate in the art show?

   What do you think students get out of the art show?

5. What do you think is the most important thing for students to learn in school?

6. How do you think this is achieved?

7. What subjects are emphasized in your school’s formal curriculum?

   Why are these subjects emphasized?
8. Since you began teaching at this school, has the formal curriculum gone through any changes?

   Explain.

9. What is the reason for the changes?

10. In the last four years, have you seen changes in instructional time for your subject area?

    If so, what have the changes been?

    What is different?

    Have you seen the same changes in other subjects?

    If so, give examples/explain.

    Do teachers have the flexibility to change the amount of instructional time for their subject area?

11. Have you changed instructional strategies in the past four years?

    If so, give examples/explain.

    What brought about these changes?
12. Since you began teaching at this school, have resource allocations shifted?  

   Explain.

   Does this affect your teaching strategies?

   Does this affect your teaching effectiveness?

13. Do the arts have a place in education?  

   Why or why not?

14. Do you believe the arts should be a part of the core curriculum in the education of our youth?  

   If yes, should art be tested?

15. Congratulations on your school’s academic performance last year. Your school received a report card rating of (Excellent or Effective). To what do you attribute your school’s rating?
APPENDIX D

INFORMATION REQUEST

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AND ARTS EDUCATION:
A CASE STUDY

Cydney Spohn, Principal Investigator
The University of Akron
College of Education
Educational Foundations and Leadership

INFORMATION REQUEST FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

1. Arts education classes (dance, music, visual arts, drama) offered as part of the curriculum at each grade level in your school
2. Instructional time for arts classes in your school at each grade level and for each school year starting in 2001
3. Instructional time for mathematics at each grade level in your school, school years 2001-2002 and 2005-2006
4. Instructional time for science at each grade level in your school, school years 2001-2002 and 2005-2006
5. Instructional time for reading at each grade level in your school, school years 2001-2002 and 2005-2006
6. Number of visual art teachers in your school
7. How many visual art teachers are “highly qualified” as defined by NCLB and Ohio’s teaching standards?
8. Number of music teachers in your school
9. How many music teachers are “highly qualified” as defined by NCLB and Ohio’s teaching standards?
10. Number of dance teachers in your school
11. How many dance teachers are “highly qualified” as defined by NCLB and Ohio’s teaching standards?
12. Number of drama/theater teachers in your school
13. How many drama/theater teachers are “highly qualified” as defined by NCLB and Ohio’s teaching standards?
15. NCLB grants earmarked for arts education programs in your school for fiscal years 2002-2006
16. Excluding NCLB, funding sources and grants received for arts education in your school for fiscal years 2001-2006
17. Number of students in your school per grade level
18. Amount of your building budget reserved for art and music in your school per year (2002-present)
19. Amount of your building budget reserved for math and language per year (2002-present)
20. Total building budget each year (2002-present)
21. Consumable materials fees per student (FY 2005-06 only) and a breakdown of how money is spent on each student
## APPENDIX E

### DATA COLLECTION CATALOG

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### Research Questions

**Question I:** Has instructional time for arts education in Ribbon Valley been affected as a result of NCLB’s policies?

**Question II:** Has the district’s formal curriculum for art education changed since NCLB went into effect in 2002?

**Question III:** Have arts teachers and non arts teachers altered classroom practices as a result of NCLB and were the teaching strategies effective?

**Question IV:** Have arts education budgets and spending changed since NCLB went into effect in 2002?

### Key

A: High School Principal  
B: Middle School Principal  
C: Elementary School (gr. 3-5)  
D: Elementary School (gr. 1-2)  
E: Elementary School (PreK-K)  
T: Central Office/Treasurer  
S: Central Office/Superintendent