Dear Visual Arts Instructor,

The resources in this Proficiency Based Graduation Requirement - Visual Arts Toolkit will provide you with materials for advocating for arts programming. This CD includes educational material to share with administrators, guidance offices, parents, and community members, as well as assessments and images of student work to help you measure what proficiency looks like.

You are embarking on school reform. The prospects of this are both exciting and nerve wracking. The good news is that you are part of a professional learning community, and are therefore not alone. You have regular access to experienced educators who share a common goal and vision. You and your colleagues will be implementing new assessments, studying your current practices and curriculum, and incorporating every means in your arsenal to help all students achieve the standards. You will have much to compare, question, and analyze.

The work that you and your colleagues are involved in is science. It is critical that we conduct validity and reliability tests with the assessments so that we can be sure they lead to the expected result: proficiency in visual arts. Teachers are struggling to develop significant common tasks and help their students with disabilities to achieve. Elementary and middle school educators are questioning their place in school reform. Therefore, it is encumbered upon you to document yours and your students work carefully. Our work will help ensure that school reform in the visual arts is connected and meaningful. Our work will be thoughtful and measured.

Your efforts will help all children in the state of Rhode Island. That's a pretty heady statement, and completely true. Together we will not only be making a difference, but we will be affecting change.

Rosemary Burns
Project Director
Visual Arts-Professional Learning Community

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

<> Introduction Documents

     Letter To Teachers

     Frequently Asked Questions

     Glossary of Terms

     List of Authors

<> Folder 1: Promotion Materials:

     Proficiency in the Visual Arts Informational Brochure

     Proficiency in the Visual Arts Informational Poster

     Letter of Support from Commissioner McWalters

<> Folder 2: Rubrics for Assessing Proficiency in the Visual Arts:

     Creating Rubric

     Responding to Discussion Rubric

     Responding to Own Work Rubric

     Responding to Exemplar Work Rubric

     Student Record Form for Tracking Development,

          Available as PDF and individual word document to personalize

<> Folder 3: PowerPoint Presentations:

     Proficiency-Based Graduation in Visual Arts Education Presentation

     National Arts Education Association (NAEA) Arts Advocacy Presentation

     NAEA Template for Visual Arts Advocacy

     Examples of Proficient Student Work

Frequently Asked Questions

General Proficiency Information

Q: What is proficiency in the arts? How is proficiency evaluated?

Students must demonstrate proficiency in the arts in one of the following disciplines: 1. Visual Arts, 2. Music, 3. Theatre, or 4. Dance. Proficiency is demonstrated standards-based skills and knowledge judged on evidence produced in a student's portfolio. Student work must be proficient in two areas: creating and responding. The portfolio is a body of work generated at school, home, and/or in the community, all of which must be assessed by a certified arts educator endorsed by the school from where a high school diploma will be issued.

Proficiency is assessed through common rubrics that have been endorsed by the Rhode Island Department of Education. These assessments, along with the PBGR Standards and Portfolio List are available on line at: www.riartslearning.net

Q: Can schools phase in arts PBGR's through a graduated system?

No, all students graduating in 2008 will need to meet the proficiency requirements in the arts.

District Requirements

Q: Which districts are involved with proficiency at his time?

All districts have been notified of the new requirements. They have been given the opportunity to attend and participate in RIDE sponsored workshops across the state. All districts are already required to report to RIDE as to their district graduation plans.

Currently, several districts are piloting the Visual Arts PBGR assessments. Reports of that work can be found at the Arts Learning Network website: www.riartslearning.net

Q: How will district administrations be held accountable for fulfilling Arts PBGR's?

*The **Rhode Island High School Diploma System Technical Assistance Bulletin** was issued to districts in February 2005. The document states that Peer Review Teams will look at Arts and Social Studies Proficiency plans in 2011. The TA Bulletin states: "It is not sufficient to simply catalogue what is currently being taught in Grades 9-12. As in the other core content areas, districts will be responsible, through their local assessment systems, of collecting evidence to certify that each student has met the established definition of proficiency" (p.8). A Visual Art portfolio list and assessment rubrics have been developed for the use of all districts in the state and can be found at the Arts Learning Network website: www.riartslearning.net*

Q: How can a student complete a portfolio in one semester? Most districts have only a one-semester art requirement in place for graduation.

Most students will be unable to achieve the PBGR's in the arts in a semester. Even though many schools only require a half credit, students must still achieve a proficiency however long it takes them. Students must be given multiple opportunities to achieve proficiency, and since it is a standards-based/ performance assessed course of study, students will require differing amounts of time to reach standards. Some students will complete aspects of their portfolio in middle school, depending on their readiness. Districts must map their art curriculums back from the graduation requirements to ensure that all students are working toward graduation from the beginning of their schooling.

Q: When students submit work for review, how will an assessment team know if the student actually completed the work?

The ethical questions can be addressed by district enforcement of record keeping as well as disclaimers that are signed by the student and parents. Typically, we will find growth and progress in a student's portfolio, as well as a unique quality throughout the work. Since a student's portfolio must also contain assessed written statements reflecting the student's knowledge and experience, while not impossible, forgery will be challenging.

Special Education

Q: How do we evaluate Special Education students? Does an Individual Education Plan (IEP) override Proficiency?

The Board of Regents has mandated that all students must achieve proficiency. The IEP is intended to provide students with disabilities appropriate learning opportunities that will help them achieve. Federal law requires all teachers and districts to abide by a student's IEP. If a student's disability affects their ability to successfully achieve proficiency in their chosen art discipline, then the IEP must reflect strategies and goals that will help that student achieve.

Visual Arts Proficiency GLOSSARY

DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS

Achieving *proficiency* is a *developmental process* that requires long term preparation that includes multiple opportunities to learn throughout a student's k-12 education. The various stages of development towards proficiency are broken down in state assessment rubrics as *beginning*, *emerging*, *proficient* and *advanced proficient*.

These four categories also correspond with incremental skill sets: *identifying*, *describing*, *analyzing* and *evaluating*. *Identifying* is the most basic skill, requiring only naming or recalling, *Describing* requires more skill by explaining. A *proficient* student is able to *analyze*, which could mean the student is able to compare/contrast, differentiate, or measure. An *advanced proficient* student *evaluates* and *synthesizes* or assesses and creates something new from what s/he has learned.

ELEMENTS OF ART AND PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Some elements of art are: line, value, color, shape, shade, etc.
Some principles of design are: balance, contrast, movement, pattern, etc.

EXEMPLAR WORK

Successful work created by an artist or a student artist that exhibits key standards.

GSE

Grade Span Expectations in English/Language Arts

PBGR-VA

Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements in the Visual Arts.

PROFICIENCY

Demonstrated standards-based skills and or knowledge judged on evidence provided by the learner.

RUBRIC

A *rubric* is an assessment tool used to measure student work. Determining visual arts *proficiency* requires the use of assessment rubrics that have been designed by the *Visual Arts Professional Learning Community* and approved by the state. A *rubric* assesses a collection of criteria rather than a single score. A well used rubric should be shown to students before they are assessed so that students know what is expected of them.

SYMBOL SYSTEM

A network or series of marks that represent something else by association, resemblance, or convention, especially a material object used to represent something intangible.

SYNTHESIZE

See DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSS entry

VA-PLC

Visual Arts Professional Learning Community.

The Rhode Island State Council on the Arts and VSA arts of Rhode Island supported the work of sixteen art educators from ten public school districts, a charter school, and an independent school to work in partnership to identify student artwork as proficient. Each of these individuals contributed an enormous amount of time and knowledge because they are committed to the fact that all children will have greater opportunities to live life more fully after developing a meaningful depth and breadth of knowledge in the arts.

Additionally, this work would not be possible without the support of each of the school districts listed, as they provided release time during the school day.

Authors:

Rosemary Burns
Project Director
Lincoln High School

Jeremy Bearer-Friend
Project Assistant
Brown University

Renee Bissell
Middletown High School

Karen Elias Clavet
Flat River Middle School,
Coventry

Heather Delaney
Lincoln Middle School

Kristin Heynen
Portsmouth High School

Mel Johnson
Portsmouth High School

Manette Jungles
Feinstein High School,
Providence

Sharon Katseff
Pilgrim High School,
Warwick

Jean Larsen
North Kingstown High
School

Marilyn E. McKeever
Pilgrim High School,
Warwick

Carolyn Moseley
Beacon Charter School,
Woonsocket

Chris Mullen
Mt. Hope High School,
Bristol/Warren

Carolyn Peck
Cranston Public Schools

Jude Pelchat
Annenberg Institute for
School Reform

Aurel Peterson
School One,
Providence

Stephen Saunders
Warwick Public Schools

Jeannine L. Chartier
Project Consultant
VSA arts of Rhode Island